

# The Icelandic Canadian

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## Christmas Message

THE most widely read editorial ever written appeared 55 years ago in the New York Sun, in answer to the following letter. It has been reprinted by the Sun annually at Christmas time ever since, has been quoted in a score of languages the world over.

*Dear Editor: I am eight years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Please tell me the truth.*

—Virginia O'Hanlon

The editorial writer, Francis P. Church, who was assigned to reply to Virginia, at first disdained the task as trivial, then found himself warming to it as a real opportunity, and finally wrote the words that millions since have warmed to read:

★

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect in intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth.

"Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy.

Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

"Not to believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.

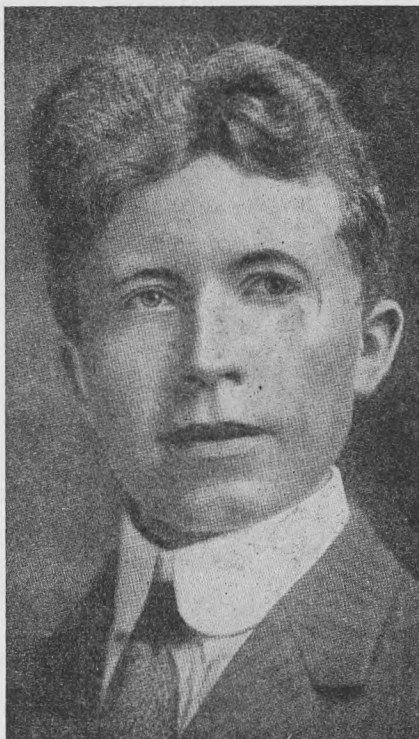
"You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest men, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view the supernal beauty beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

"No Santa Claus? Thank God! He lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

# VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON

YOUTH and UNDERGRADUATE

by RUTH IVERSON



Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson

As we reflect on the attainments of persons of national and international fame, it is often with a curiosity as to their background and heritage. What were the inherent abilities and qualities with which these individuals were endowed, and what attributes were evidenced in the early lives of these personalities which distinguished them later as leaders?

For many, the outstanding characteristics are perseverance and diligence, but for others unusual, precocious abilities are demonstrated early in life. A variation of interests is noted, and a difference in values and attitudes is observed. To many a youth, statements are accepted in faith as fact, but to

some they become a challenge which demands proof. A prolonged, logical series of interrogations may result which leaves adults musing over the possibilities of that youth who, at an early age, shows ability to apply knowledge in various fields. In maturity these possibilities are expressed in various ways. For some they have become, as Franklin stated, the means of "indefatigable activity in their self-pursuits". For others, a consuming desire to accept a challenge and to pursue it diligently results in the enrichment of that country's history through advancements and contributions which are necessarily made.

One of the outstanding scientists of our country is a former North Dakotan, Vilhjalmur Stefansson. "He is recognized as the greatest, living, Arctic explorer and interpreter of the North". \*) This distinction was gained as a result of thirteen years of i-

\*) Brochure—Minot Lions Club, February 19, 1946.

The author of this article, Mrs. Ruth Iverson, is of Norwegian descent, the wife of Iverson, an accountant in Minot, N. Dak. After their three daughters were grown up, Mrs. Iverson decided to go back to college. She was graduated as a B.A. last spring from State Teachers' College, Minot, N. Dak. During her senior year Mrs. Iverson, majoring in Social Science, elected to study the youth and undergraduate period of Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson's life. She worked on this project, which was a requirement for the Social Studies Seminar-Workshop, for a year. In her research she has salvaged many interesting facts and anecdotes about the early life of this famous man.

tensive, scientific work in the Arctic region which included several expeditions. The first was an ethnological expedition to the Mackenzie Delta in 1906 and 1907, and then the years 1908 to 1918 were spent in scientific explorations north of Alaska and Canada.

This career was enhanced by an inherent power of communication through writing and lecturing. He is the author of fourteen books besides numerous compilations of scientific data for public and private use. He is in demand as an authoritative and inspiring lecturer on the Arctic concerning its potential and strategic importance.

This personality is described by some of his contemporaries as: "the most brilliant person whom I have known", "an idealist", "a controversial figure", "a non-conformist", etc., but all agree on his erudition, his resourcefulness, and his adaptability.

Mr. Stefansson's parents—Johann and Ingibjörg—were among the immigrants to New Iceland, Manitoba, in the spring of 1876 from their home in Iceland, where they had lived on a farm. They homesteaded near Arnes, Manitoba in the New Iceland settlement. At that time this land was dense bush and bogs—except the lake shore—and added to this difficult topo-

graphy was the physical suffering of the community from malnutrition and epidemics. The Stefansson family lived here for five years, and during this time two of their children died and one son, Vilhjalmur, was born. Johann Stefansson served as a member of the Governing Council of this community and participated in its general welfare.

By the spring of 1881, several of these Icelandic families had determined to move south across the border to Dakota Territory and establish their homes there. Their residence became Pembina County, and the village, Mountain, North Dakota. Here, "in 1884, a Lutheran Church was built which is the oldest church in any Icelandic settlement in America".<sup>1)</sup> Here too, interest in learning and education was manifested and, despite their meagre possessions, books which they had brought from Iceland and others which they had acquired were a part of the possessions of each family. It is noteworthy that typical of an evening's diversion was the gathering of the family in the living room, each with some handiwork, listening to the reading of the sagas by the father or some member of the family. It was not un-

<sup>1)</sup> Letter, Mrs. H. F. Danielson, March 17, 1951.

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usual to find that these rural families were familiar with all the Scandinavian languages and were studying other foreign languages during the long, winter months.

In this community, too, Johann Stefansson took an active part. He was a diligent supporter of the church, and avid reader, and made literary contributions to newspapers of this area besides tending his farm. He is described as one who might have been a "Father of Confederation, with his strong looking face: wide, fairly-high forehead; straight, medium-sized nose; eyes rather far apart; a straight-lined mouth; and a serious expression."

The four children, two sons and two daughters, and their mother were left to their own resources in 1892 when on December 31, the head of this household died. Although their farm was soon sold, the family continued to live in this community and it was here that the children received their elementary education.

This elementary training may have been somewhat spasmodic from a formal point of view, but we find that Vilhjalmur was familiar with books at an early age and that also at an early age there is a marked concentration and notice of detail in his reading. His friends, who call him "Stef", remember him as one who did not especially enjoy the sports and games which are of common interest to boys. They would discover him absorbed in a book and unaware of the pastimes going on about him. Stef preferred to go for a walk with his companions discussing some subject or telling them stories at which he was very adept. One friend relates that when Stef was ten years of age he narrated the story in Icelandic of **Tom Sawyer** by Mark Twain which he had read in the English language. Later, when this friend read

this book, he discovered that Stef had given an almost verbatim account.

At fifteen, this youth was reading books by Darwin, Huxley and Ingalls and was demonstrating independence in his thinking by foregoing some of the traditional practices of the church. Stef managed to subscribe to the **American Review of Reviews**, and from these excursions in reading would seek out some well-read, age householder and discuss pertinent and abstruse topics. Sources of income were limited for a rural boy at this time. Stef had had various jobs as a farm helper during his youth, and he climaxed this farm experience with a period as a herdsman under the employment of his older brother. This project was undertaken since these farmers had not been able to fence their farms sufficiently for pasture as yet, and were willing to pay a fee for supervision of their cattle during the summer. The cattle were taken to the northeastern part of Ramsey County as this area was as yet unsettled. Lakes and sloughs were not uncommon in this part of the county and ducks and geese were prevalent. Stef, an expert marksman, found diversion in hunting while tending cattle. Advantages are often balanced with disadvantages and in this instance the disadvantage was in the form of swarms of mosquitoes. To relieve this predicament, Stef wore mosquito netting attached to his hat to thwart these marauders. Quiet intervals, at this work, would find him reading or, on occasion writing poetry. The remuneration from this employment enabled him to matriculate at the preparatory school of the University of North Dakota in 1897.

An incident during the summer of 1897 made a deep impression on one of Stef's friends who was several years older than he. These two young men



were sitting on a bridge called "Elinar Brúin" which spanned a creek just south of Mountain. The day was uncomfortably warm and the boys were in no particular hurry. As they were talking, they were tossing pebbles into the water which seemed to be static, but by the change from the circular to the oval ripples as they became larger, Stef told his friend that the water was in motion even though they could not see it moving. Then Stef said, "Now I can understand why the earth's orbit is oblong". This remark left his friend puzzled, and it was some time before he arrived at the explanation of this statement.

In order to make the most of his limited funds, Stef and two friends — Gudmundur Grimson and John G. Johnson — rented an old shack on the Richard's farm across the tracks and a little west from the University as their dwelling for his second year at this school. This shack was heated by one of those old-fashioned, four-griddle cook stoves. The firebox was so small that it had to be refilled every two hours with wood, which was their only fuel. They took their lunch with them

to school and this salvaged any perishable items as everything in the cabin froze during the day. They ate their box lunches in the basement hall at the University with other kindred spirits including Lynn J. Frazier and N. C. McDonald. At night, they took turns getting up every two hours to replenish the firebox, and Mr. Grimson thinks that this was Stef's first Arctic experience. With these minimum comforts, these gentlemen lived here at an approximate cost of \$1.50 per week.

In the spring, they went out to teach in the rural schools, coming back to the University on Saturdays to keep up their scholastic pursuits. After these first two years Stef roomed at Budge Hall, a men's dormitory on the campus and part-time work was secured at the school to augment his funds.

As an undergraduate, he was particularly interested in literature and poetry. In response to a request by a professor in English for an original poem, Stef submitted "The Boarding School Epic" which was enjoyed by the faculty and students.

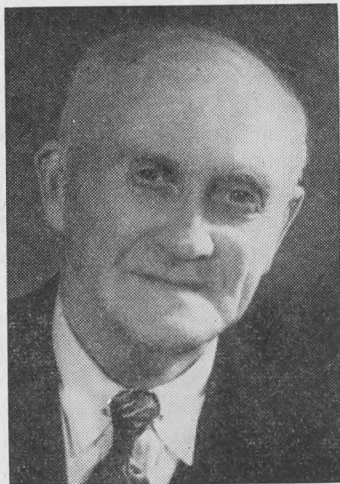
### THE BOARDING SCHOOL EPIC

I can refrain no longer. Lofty Muse  
 Descend to me on alban wings. Infuse  
 Into my sluggish veins the liquid flame  
 Of poetry, that I may sing the fame  
 Of onions and hash. Hast thou, O Muse,  
 Not smelt them in my breath, and can'st refuse  
 Thy aid to one who for six long weeks has dined  
 On such ambrosial viands. Lift my mind,  
 O Goddess, that my spirit wings may soar  
 To heights of sublime song, such as of yore  
 Were dreamt by Milton. Let the sweeping swell  
 Of sound, deluging every dale and dell,  
 Be echoed to us from high heaven's vaults  
 Down to the azure deep! O it exalts  
 The little mind of man to feel that he  
 Is hand in glove with mysteries that be

(Continued on Page 48)

## Thingvalla Pioneer's Story

by S. B. Olson



S. B. Olson

In the grey dawn of April 30th 1886, 14 people climbed into the double-box of a wagon, to which a sturdy team of horses was hitched.

There was a raw chill in the early morning air, as we left the little ghost-like village of Solsgirth, Manitoba, and headed North-West.

Our destination was the town of Shellmouth, Man., in the Shell-river valley, close to the Saskatchewan border. On the seat in front were the driver, and the Government colonization agent, Helgi Jónsson, publisher and editor of the Icelandic weekly "Leifur" published in Winnipeg. In the back were Mrs. Einar Suðfjörð (Guðbjörg), her four daughters, Sigridur, Monica, Kristin, and Maria; an elderly couple, Narfi Halldorsson, his wife Ástriður, and their son Guðbrandur; our family, my mother (Guðrún) Mrs. Björn (Olafsson) Olson, my two sisters, Guðny and Jónína, and myself, Thorsteinn (Steini). I had just passed my eighth birthday and was

most interested in the novel experience this travel afforded. We had come from Winnipeg by Canadian Pacific Railway to Portage La Prairie, and from there by Man. & N.W. Ry. (later bought by the C.P.R.) to Solsgirth, which was the end of steel at that time, April 29th, 1886.

That night we all slept on the floor of the railroad station waiting room, no one complaining of the discomfort, and all sleeping the sleep of exhaustion, to be aroused while it was still dark for the long journey before us to Shellmouth.

We were well on our way before the sun rose. The chill morning air and with only trunks and bedding for seats as we bumped along the uneven prairie trail, made the travelling most uncomfortable.

As the sun climbed higher in a cloudless sky, it grew warmer, and the

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S. B. Olson is the son of Björn Ólafsson (Olson) from Súlnesi, Borgarfjarðarsýsla, Iceland, and his wife Guðrún Jónsdóttir from Heimaskaga, Akranesi, in the same county. They came to Canada (Nova Scotia) in 1878. After they left the Thingvalla district in Saskatchewan they moved to the west shore of Lake Manitoba.

Steini (S. B.) Olson was married at Westbourne, Man., May 22, 1899 to Hólmfríður Ólafssdóttir. Her parents were Ólafur Thorleifsson, born at Svartagili, Þingvallasveit in Árnessýsla, and his wife Guðbjörg Guðnadóttir, born at Haga in Grímsnesi, Árnessýsla. They came to Canada in 1887, lived in Winnipeg, later at Big Point and, finally, Langruth, Man. Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Olson lived in the district west of Lake Manitoba (Westbourne, Marshland and Langruth) until moving into Winnipeg in 1943.

They moved to Vancouver, B. C. in 1948 where they now reside. Their two daughters are married and live in Vancouver. There are eight sons, in various parts of Canada and the U.S.A., all holding responsible positions, three of them being in Winnipeg.

travellers grew interested in the surrounding country. But there was little to attract attention except endless grey prairie with very little green showing through last years growth of dead grass.

We crossed some gullies and creeks with the water reaching almost up to the box, but with good hard bottoms. Climbing up from these gullies to the level prairie was sometimes a stiff hard pull for the horses, so to lighten the load the children were allowed to get out and follow behind up to the top and this was a welcome change from the cramped positions in the shaking wagon. The drab surroundings and the monotonous, uneventful journey failed to dampen our spirits as we romped and frolicked up the steep inclines. For us, who had never been out of the city limits, it was a new experience and a glorious adventure.

We travelled all that day and all that night in a north-westerly direction and reached Shellmouth at sunrise next morning. It was a great relief to get out of the wagon and stretch our bruised, weary limbs after a seemingly endless night of jolting and vain efforts to get a little sleep.

But the beautiful sight that met our eyes on that sunny morning of May 1st, lifted our spirits and made us forget the misery of the night. The bright sun revealed to us the village nestling down in the valley and beyond it the long range of hills extending far to the north. This cheery scene has always remained in my memory.

Our journey ended at the home of Helgi Jonsson and his wife, Ingibjörg Guðmundsdóttir. The house stood on a rise near the east edge of the valley overlooking the town and giving a wide view to the west.

At that time the route had been surveyed for a continuation of the

Man. & N.W. Ry. from Solsgirth, and with this promise of a railroad to come through the district, the village of Shellmouth had come into being. Here a number of prospective settlers halted before moving into the wilderness fifteen miles to the north-west, which was to become the Thingvalla-district.

A sawmill and planer on the east bank of the river was operating, which gave employment to a considerable number of men. There were also 3 general stores, a hotel, blacksmith shop, school, livery barn, and other places of business, besides a scattering of homes. One of the stores was owned by the aforementioned Helgi Jonsson, and the blacksmith was Vigfus Thorsteinson, who with his wife and family had arrived some months previously.

The sawmill was owned and managed by two Englishmen in partnership under the name of Mitchell and Bucknell.

These mill-owners had a timber lease 90 miles north of Shellmouth, and employed a large number of men in a lumber camp there during the winter months. The logs were floated down the Shell river during high water in the spring, and sawed into lumber to supply local demand. With the prospect of a railway in the near future, this little northern town was alive with activity and progress.

The population was predominantly Scottish and Irish, also a scattering of half-breeds (Métis), and a number of Icelandic pioneer settlers for the proposed colony of Thingvalla.

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My parents, with their family, had come from Iceland (Akranes, Borgarfjarðarsýsla) in July 1878 to Nova Scotia, with a group of Icelandic immigrants. At that time, a homestead, 160 acres, with one acre cleared was

available to anyone willing to settle on the land, and was a free grant, with no restrictions, except the proviso of permanent occupancy.

A number of the group accepted this offer, and a small settlement came into being.

But it soon became obvious that even the heroic efforts and optimism of those valiant early Icelandic immigrants, could not successfully combat the insurmountable difficulties, in a country, covered with a forest of gigantic hardwood trees, and so the settlement was short lived, some moving to North Dakota, and some to Manitoba. In this group were the Brynjolfsson family, some Skaptasons, J. Magnus Bjarnason with his parents and others whose names I can not recall. We lived in Nova Scotia for 4 years. My father got employment on a large estate owned by Colonel Laurie, a Scotsman. The wages were 90 cents per day with midday dinner included. That was top wages for ordinary labor at that time.

The mode of living was very much different from what we enjoy in this day and age. The daily fare much simpler, although adequate for the individual needs. We never saw wheat flour or sugar during our stay in Nova Scotia. Instead there was Buckwheat flour which made good bread, dark in colour but tasted good and was nutritious. For sweetening there was a kind of syrup called treacle.

Delicacies there were none, but there was no scarcity of good plain wholesome food and there was some fruit, such as apples and wild berries.

The house where we lived stood on a hill, and if at any time we had a little snow, which occurred very, very rarely, the school children had a glorious time sliding on small sleighs down our hill. The schoolhouse was situated

near by, and my older sister Gudm went to school there.

The main road through the district ran along the foot of the hill toward the Laurie estate, and thence to the town of Shubenagedy by the sea.

Most of the country-side made this town their marketing place, and we had many overnight visitors from the Icelandic settlement on their journey to market to get provisions.

These travellers were always welcome and their visits were enjoyed by both visitors and hosts, as they were a pleasant interlude in an otherwise monotonous life in a new country.

Everyone was in good spirits and optimistic about the future, despite hardships and poverty.

In the latter part of the winter of 1881-82 news came about the progress and settling of the west country, particularly, Manitoba, and the "Boom" in Winnipeg, also the good wages to be had there.

My parents having become doubtful as to the future, after 4 years patient endurance of the conditions prevailing in Nova Scotia, and no apparent signs of a change for the better, decided to go west.

So in the spring of 1882 we boarded the train in Halifax and journeyed west to Winnipeg, Manitoba.

There seemed to be an acute housing shortage in Winnipeg, so we had to live for some months in a tent, making one more in a tent district strung out along a street west from main St. (Ross Avenue, if my memory is correct). Father obtained work immediately at \$3.50 per day, at the building of City Hall and he heard from fellow workers that \$5.00 had been paid for common labor the previous summer. But the "Boom" apparently was on the wane, hence the lower wages. Life in a tent during the hot summer



months, on open prairie, no shade of any kind, was very trying to say the least. To make things a little worse, we all came down with measles, helplessly weak, with no one to minister to our needs. Mother, with supreme effort managed to attend to absolute necessities, though barely able to move herself. But on the dark cloud of helplessness there appeared a silver lining, and encouragement, in the form of an elderly Irish woman, who lived in a tent herself, nearby.

She proved a good Samaritan, brought us milk, and many other things, besides helping in innumerable ways. We have always remembered her with sincere, heartfelt gratitude.

In the fall of that year we moved into a small building on the banks of the Red river and lived there for a time. Later we moved into a two-storey house on Jemina Ave. (now Elgin Ave) and it was from there, I first attended school in the spring of 1884. It was the Central School located on William Avenue.

I was the only Iclander in our room, and as it seemed that I was a specimen of humanity unknown to them, speaking very little of their language, I was subjected to various kinds of abuse, ridicule, and shunned by my schoolmates.

Being of a somewhat sociable nature and longing to take part in the games and doings, I became very downhearted, and often shed tears in my solitude, brooding over this treatment, and mans inhumanity to man generally.

In 1885 there arrived from Iceland a family consisting of Markus Jónsson, his wife and two or three children, together with their relatives, an elderly couple (the man's name was Jóhannes) and a fourteen-year-old boy named Árni Jónsson.

These families moved into the house next to ours, and Árni commenced his schooling at the Cenrtal, so after that I had a staunch protector, also a friend and companion, and the best of pals, whom I have never forgotten.

The year 1885 was the year of the North-West Rebellion. There is not much in connection with, that event clearly defined in my memory except that I was conscious of a certain tension and anxiety, and eagerness for news from the scenes of conflict.

One thing I clearly remember, and that is the return of the soldiers from the west after the surrender of the enemy.

Mother took me down to Main Street to let me see the soldiers march by on their way from the C.P.R. station to the barracks.

Two arches had been erected across Main Street not far from City Hall. and on top of each arch a plank walk had been constructed, all the way across the street, and on each plank-walk a piper marched back and forth, playing the bagpipes while the steady stream of soldiers passed under the arches.

Thousands lined both sides of the street and the cheering was deafening. The soldiers looked haggard and weary, and their uniforms bore evidence of rough, hard wear.

As the Winnipeg boom slowed down the times changed and there was little employment to be had. Those of the common labor class found it hard to get work, and the future seemed very uncertain. As a solution to the problem a large number of people made the decision to leave the city and secure homesteads in some of the districts in the North-West where land was available for homestead entry.

(Continued on Page 53)

## North of Seventy-Four

The Canadian Arctic, according to the popular phrase, is Canada's last frontier. It is a frontier in the sense that it is on the edge of the unknown. It is undeveloped. The men who go north, though living in a world of "gadgets" which the frontiersmen of the last century never knew, have something of the same spirit of dedication on which the western reaches of the continent were dependent for their development. Whether the Arctic is a frontier in the sense that its little communities are the forerunners of a new island of civilization may be a doubtful proposition, but the growing importance of the Arctic to life in the south is unquestionable.

The interest which the Arctic holds is almost entirely scientific, and a number of Canadian stations have been established throughout the north for scientific purposes. These communities are dotted lightly across the top of the map of Canada. In a sense, they start at Fort Churchill, for it is an important base of supply serving the scattered world of the Canadian Arctic.

To Canadians living in the comfortable latitudes of the main cities, Fort Churchill, at 58 degrees N., seems a remote settlement. But Fort Churchill, which lies not far from where the northern boundary of Manitoba touches Hudson Bay, is an old established community with a history longer than Ottawa's. Two centuries ago Fort Churchill was an important trading post for the Hudson Bay Company and the centre of military power guarding the approaches to what is now central Canada. Today, Churchill is as cold and far away as ever but it is 600 miles below the Arctic Circle; and

to the men who live in the real Arctic, it looks like southern civilization.

### THE REAL NORTH

By any standard, Resolute Bay, on Cornwallis Island at 74 degrees N., is certainly remote from settled Canadian life. It is a third of the way from the Arctic Circle to the Pole, north even of the land where the Eskimos dwell. Its climate is harsh. Yet even Resolute Bay with its well-equipped airfield, its good living quarters and its cluster of comfortably-furnished buildings seems like civilization to the men who live in the lonely isolation of the remote weather-station 500 miles back in the empty wilderness.

Churchill has a scheduled air service, and even rail service, to the south. But it is only twice a year that aircraft provide a link between civilization and the remote weather stations on Mould Bay, Isachsen, Alert and Eureka. Each spring and each autumn the RCAF flies its North Stars from Montreal through Churchill and Resolute, out to the farthest outposts of Canadian civilization at about the same time planes of the USAF are flying from Thule in northern Greenland to bring men and supplies to two other Canadian weather stations at Alert and Eureka. Each summer, ships of the United States Navy and Coast Guard make their way to Resolute. If ice conditions are favourable, they may reach one or two of the smaller settlements but no one can ever count on this. The air-lifts are the real life-line of the remote weather stations, and perhaps this is the spring air-lift which is psychologically the more important. The North Stars which fly to the distant Arctic stations in April, just a day out of Montreal, break the monotony

ony of the long, dark winter. They bring in new men to replace the veterans; they carry food, supplies and equipment for the summer projects; they fly in the scientists—botanists, geodesists and astronomers—who have come to explore one of Canada's richest scientific frontiers.

The important men of the Arctic are the meteorologists and their associates who man the outposts within a few hundred miles of the Pole. Almost all other activities in this part of the world are designed to support the meteorological programme or are dependent upon the weather men. The RCAF brings in the men, their food, their equipment, even their houses and working buildings. Radio operators are on duty to transmit their information south, where it is used to predict the weather in every part of North America, and, indeed, in Europe and the Eastern Hemisphere. Scientists who go to the Arctic to learn about Arctic life, the characteristics of frozen ground, the shape of the earth or the nature of the aurora borealis are all dependent on the weather station for their operations.

Six years ago, there was little activity of any kind in the Canadian Archipelago north of Lancaster Sound. The weather-stations did not exist. The area was inadequately mapped. Little was known about life in the Canadian Arctic, and even less about those scientific problems to which the Arctic yields so many answers. Then in 1947, Canada and the United States worked out a joint programme of Arctic weather-stations. It was a five-year programme in the course of which five stations were established through the joint efforts, and for the joint use of both countries. The U. S. Weather Bureau was as anxious as the Department of Transport's Meteorological

Division to establish reporting stations in the Arctic, since weather from the Pole does not stop at the Forty-Ninth Parallel. The United States Navy provided ships on which Canadian and United States Officials penetrated as far as navigation would allow in search of sites for the tiny but important new scientific communities. The United States Air Force bore the responsibility for "airlifting" the men and supplies to places which ships could not reach. The plans so carefully made on paper on the basis of the available information had to be changed in the face of Arctic realities. The main station had to be placed some hundreds of miles east of the intended location and was eventually put at Resolute on Cornwallis Island. That was on August 31, 1947. Winter was fast approaching, and the men and ships worked long months until ships and aircraft could reach the spot the next year. Two years later, the RCAF took over an airstrip near the station, and now Resolute is the focal point for all activities in the Canadian Arctic.

### STARTING THE CHAIN

It was on Easter Sunday of 1947 that the first landing was made at Eureka on Ellesmere Island. Supplies were moved in by air from Thule in Greenland in temperatures from 30 degrees to 50 degrees below zero. Heavy aircraft, landing on the thick ice, were able to discharge their cargo so efficiently that two trips a day were made until the station was established, with sufficient supplies to last 400 days. All this unloading and the construction of temporary buildings were completed by five men who managed at the same time, to start their weather observation programme.

In April 1948, Isachsen was est-

ablished by air on Ellef Rignes Island from an ice strip at Resolute. In the first ten days from the beginning of the operations, 84 tons of supplies, which had been flown in, were stored by the nine men who were originally on the staff of the station. Such is the sense of urgency in the Arctic.

Mould Bay was established about the same time on Prince Patrick Island, 500 miles west of Resolute. In a single day during that initial operation six airlifts of supplies were flown in—everything from tinned vegetables to a tractor for the eventual construction of an airstrip.

The station at Alert, the northernmost post office in the world, was established in 1950. The beginnings of this station provide a fascinating story of human courage and endurance. Two years before a tractor, with fuel and other supplies, was cached on the beach by an ice-breaker. On Easter Sunday 1950, a survey party and the three men who were to start the station were landed by a ski-equipped aircraft. Their first task was to make an airstrip so that planes might land on wheels with the food and supplies to preserve life and allow the business of weather-reporting to proceed. To make an airstrip it was necessary to get the tractor working after it had been buried for nearly two years in the Arctic Ice. There was an anxious half hour, until, to the relief and perhaps astonishment of all, the motor turned over. The station survived and is now one of the most valuable links in the Arctic chain. Today, one of the three men who went on that first expedition is back at Resolute, still inseparable from the Arctic.

#### U. S.-CANADA JOINT EFFORT

The stations were established as a joint effort of Canada and the United

States, and so they remain in operation. Canada provides half the staff; the officer in charge of each station is a Canadian; the buildings are provided by Canada, and the main responsibility for the air-lift is Canadian. The United States provides the remainder of the staff and most of the scientific equipment, as well as the ships for the sea-supply mission which each summer works its way north with heavy supplies. It is an important exercise in mutual co-operation.

The staff of the meteorological stations and of the RCAF stations at Resolute are the main permanent residents of the Arctic archipelago. Up there it is, for the most part, too far even for the Eskimos who lived here once but moved away. The Eskimos, however, are without the benefit of rockwool insulation, triple layers of sealed glass, modern oil-heating and running hot water. It is not an easy life for the permanent residents, but those who live it seem to find it rewarding.

Elsewhere in the Arctic, there is a chain of RCMP posts whose members have established well-known traditions for the preservation of law and order and of service over hundreds of thousands of square miles of Canadian Territory. Although the RCMP has had a longer association with the Arctic than any other Canadian (except the Eskimos), they are to be found mostly in the area of greater native population on the northern fringes of the mainland and in the lower eastern archipelago. Their work is not primarily scientific, but their knowledge of Arctic conditions has been of tremendous help to those whose duties are further north. Few Canadians realize the service which members of the RCMP have rendered in the Far



North, not only to the natives in the area but to the country as a whole.

Apart from the meteorological staff, the airmen and the police, there are other important workers in the Arctic. At Resolute there is a station operated by the Department of Transport to study the ionosphere—to see, in effect, what happens to radio waves as they bounce about above the atmosphere. A Seismologist at the same place is collecting valuable data on earth tremors. There are frequent visits from members of the Dominion Observatory staff seeking valuable information on the shape of the earth (which is slightly flat near the poles) by taking measurements of the force of gravity.

There are the men who come to Canada's farthest Arctic to live and work as permanent residents. Permanent residence means usually at least one year. But some of these people are old-timers, who have come back of their own choice for term after term; these have succumbed to the lure of the north. Other important work is done by the visitors, the so-called "tourists". Some have merely to take a few scientific readings, and their work is complete in a few days. Others stay for the two or three week duration of the airlift, but many more remain for the entire summer season. These people are temporary residents, not because of any reluctance to endure the conditions of the Arctic for a longer time, but because they have an important job back home, whether in Ottawa or in some other part of the continent, and the work which they do in the Arctic merely supplements it. Nearly all so-called tourists are Arctic enthusiasts; some of them have returned year after year, and, in fact, seem to exist through the winter months in anticipation of the

next journey north. Some are hard put to it to explain why they like to come to the Arctic; others will not even admit that they do, but the fact remains that they come back season after season.

The interests of the visiting scientists are strangely varied. Geodesists bearing cases of fragile and complicated equipment, travel as far as possible into the unknown to take bearings. With the most accurate available scientific instruments they are trying to determine the precise location of points on the map, the location of which may now be known only within a radius of a score of miles. The Canadian Arctic has been thoroughly mapped by aerial photography. This mass of aerial photographs, however, can be of real use only if there are certain accurately determined reference points to make a pattern of the whole photographic survey. It is the job of the geodesists to establish such references. Hence, by pin-pointing only a few widely separated places they are able to give the map makers that vital information necessary to prepare final and accurate maps for tens of thousands of square miles.

Among the most active of the Arctic enthusiasts are the naturalists. One scientist from the Department of Agriculture of Canada flies north thousands of miles each summer in search of Arctic insects. Another, from the National Museum of Canada, is concerned with Arctic flora and fauna. He will astonish the newcomer with his coloured photographs of Arctic flowers of unsurpassed beauty and delicacy. The researches of these zoologists and botanists are by no means academic. Some of the information they gather has a direct bearing on their work in more temperate climates.

Their findings will often be useful

to Government officials responsible for the welfare of native populations in the Far North.

Some of the visitors have an extremely tough job ahead of them. Airstrip mechanics go in each summer to improve the landing facilities serving the weather stations. The very short construction season requires an almost superhuman effort by men and machines. The delicacy of the earth covering the permafrost demands the most exacting care. During the weeks when these men work there is little night and little rest. They have the satisfaction of doing an extremely important job, for on their efforts depends the safety of airlift crews and the staffs of the northern weather-station. These airstrip mechanics maintain the only means of physical communication with the outside world.

A young dentist came north on the airlift. He had long been hoping to get this job and was delighted that he

was now able to make the journey. His clinic at Resolute weather-station was in a room which served as laundry, ironing-room and sometimes barber shop. The chair for his patients was on a platform constructed by the barber. (The barber of course, was a regular member of the staff of the weather-station who merely volunteered for his extra tonsorial duties.) Although the dentist's clinic may have seemed very different from his modern Toronto office, all his equipment which was provided by the Canadian Army was of the best.

These then are the activities of the Canadian Arctic—from weather reporting to botany, from airstrip construction to dentistry. It is still a frontier and it may be so for decades to come, but it is a gradually opening frontier and the people of all Canada stand to gain by the work of its pioneers.

—From: The Press Bulletin, Ottawa,

## In the News

**Paul Bardal, M.L.A.**, was elected as the first president of the Funeral Directors Association of Canada, which was organized, when funeral directors from the Maritime Provinces, Ontario and Manitoba met in Hamilton, Ontario October 4th.

★

**Miss Margret Olson** has been appointed Chief X-Ray Technician at the new hospital built by the federal Department of National Health and Welfare at Norway House. Miss Olson, a daughter of the late Rev. Carl Olson, was a school teacher for a number of years and then took a technical course in X-Ray at the Grace Hospital

Winnipeg. She left for her new post at Norway House last September.

★

**Carl A. Hallson** has been presented with a framed scroll by the Great-West Life Assurance Co. in "recognition of his outstanding contribution to the security and welfare of his policy holders, having now in force on their lives over One Million Dollars of life insurance and annuities". Carl has been with the company for seven years and every year he has qualified for the production club (Presidents' Club) as a member in the quarter million section. He is a former president of the Icelandic Canadian Club.

## *Dr. R. Petursson's Memory Honored*

by J. K. Laxdal



**Dr. Rognvaldur Petursson**

It is an honored custom among peoples of all nations to recognize outstanding leadership of their spiritual and cultural notables. The members of the Icelandic Federated Church in Winnipeg fittingly demonstrated that they are no exception to that old tradition. On September 14th, the Ladies Aid of that church sponsored an impressive service under the direction of their pastor, the Rev. Philip M Petursson, to dedicate a room, which they have furnished designed as the minister's study, to honor the memory of the late Dr. Rognvaldur Petursson who was their minister for thirteen years, and the spiritual leader of all allied groups among the Icelandic people in Western Canada for a period of forty years.

On the wall facing the entrance to

this room hangs a fine character study portrait of Dr. Petursson presented to the church by the artist, E. Marion Halldorsson, a son of the late Dr. Magnus B. and Mrs. Halldorson, who were life-long friends and co-workers of Dr. Petursson. On a table under the portrait are rare volumes of the Scriptures, copies of some of Dr. Petursson's writings, and a silver standard flying the flag of Iceland, the land he loved so well, and whose cause he served so ably and faithfully here. A painting of Thingvellir by Fridrik Sveinsson on an adjacent wall effectively reminds us of our origin from the democratic law-makers of a thousand years back. Here is depicted the scene where the grandmother of free and unfettered parliaments first held sway.

One can scarcely give significance to a dedication ceremony such as this without mentioning very briefly a few of the highlights in the career of the man whose memory is so fittingly honored by those who best knew his worth. Rognvaldur Petursson was born in Iceland, August 14, 1877. He was one of four sons of Petur Bjornsson and his wife, Margret Bjornsdottir, who immigrated to the Icelandic communities near Hallson, N. D., in 1883. Rognvaldur attended the local elementary school and continued his high school studies at Cavalier, N. D. Two further years at the college level were completed in Winnipeg.

During his undergraduate days in Winnipeg, he came under the influence of Dr. Franklin Southworth, who later became the president of the Meadville Theological Seminary. Dr.

Southworth soon recognized the intellect and the potential leadership qualities in this young disciple of Liberal Religion, and induced him to enter the Meadville Seminary in 1898, from whence he graduated four years later with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. His high scholastic attainments there earned him a Perkin's Fellowship for post graduate work at Harvard, which was devoted to the study of Ancient Germanic Languages.

During the years 1903-09 he served as minister to the Winnipeg Unitarian Church and was then appointed Field Secretary of the Canadian Icelandic Unitarian Missions. In 1915 he again resumed his ministerial duties which he held until 1922. His sermons seldom failed to inspire his congregation, for they so well revealed his inner thoughts, his keen intellect his sincerity in his religious views, and his mastery of rhetoric. Under Dr. Petursson's able leadership, so many Unitarian congregations were formed throughout the Icelandic districts of Western Canada that in 1922 it seemed feasible to organize a central **Federated Synod** of them all. Dr. Petursson assumed the leadership in this union, and acted as its adviser throughout his remaining years.

In spite of the fact that Dr. Petursson migrated to this country as a young child and became a highly esteemed and widely recognized citizen in the foremost cultural circles of both Canada and the United States, he remained essentially an Icelander at heart all his life. To those who knew him and his work best, he remains to be regarded as one of the foremost and most influential leaders of many of the principal endeavors undertaken by the Icelandic people here. As is always the case with men of distinction and ac-

complishments, his views did not always coincide with those of some of his contemporaries, but there were few who associated with him in these undertakings that did not value and respect his opinions. He played a prominent part in the founding of the Icelandic National League in 1919, and became its first president for a two-year term, and again served in that capacity from 1936 until his death in 1940. He was also the editor of the League's official organ, "Tímarit", from its first publication until his death. His own articles in that publication best reveal his determined efforts to maintain strong ties with Iceland, and the importance of this to the Icelandic people here. He was more than an advocate to this cause. Perhaps one of his chief accomplishments in this cause was to head a delegation to Ottawa which succeeded in obtaining from the Canadian government an endowment fund of \$25,000.00, which has since enabled many graduates of the University of Iceland to undertake post-graduate studies at Canadian Universities and medical schools.

Dr. Petursson's large and valuable personal library bore testimony to his wide and varied cultural interests. He was a lover of good books and fine literature, as well as a prolific writer of fine prose covering many subjects.

He first became the editor of "Heimskringla" in 1913, and later its managing editor from 1920 — 1940. He was also co-editor with Gisli Jónsson of the journal "Heimir", from 1904-1914. He further edited a large volume, sponsored by the Jon Sigurdson Chapter I.O.D.E., containing records and brief biographical sketches of all Canadian and American service men of Icelandic extraction serving in World War I. A recently edited repre-



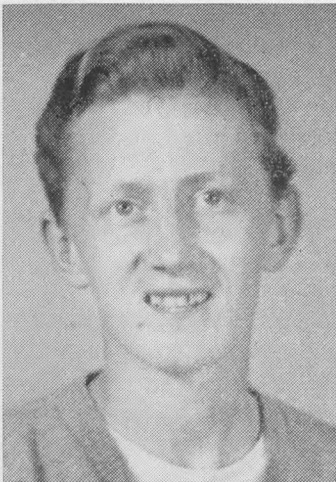
sentative volume ("Fögur er Foldin") some of Dr. Petursson's sermons and lectures best illustrates his fine prose style, his religious views, and his wide field of literary interests. Dr. Petursson was one of the earliest and fondest admirers of Stephan G. Stephansson's poetry, and was one of a small group of men which was instrumental in having his first three volumes of poetry (*Andvökur*) published. The latter three volumes of these works, as well as Stephansson's large collection of personal letters, were prepared for publication by Dr. Petursson himself.

Dr. Petursson's personal qualities and accomplishments were widely recognized. He was the recipient of many high honors. In 1928, his alma mater conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1930, the University of Iceland conferred

upon him an honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and in 1939, the government of Iceland fittingly recognized his services on its behalf by naming him a Member of the Order of the Falcon, as Knight Commander with Star.

In 1898 Dr. Petursson married Holmfridur Jonsdottir Kristjansson, his surviving widow, who, all through their life together, supported him in his undertakings, and who is still active in the church organization they built here. Throughout their life together they were generous and congenial hosts to a large circle of local friends, and distinguished visitors from Iceland and elsewhere. Three of their children, Margret, Olafur, and Peter, reside in Winnipeg. Thorvaldur, the eldest son, lives in Toronto.

## In the News



**Gene Blomgren**

On graduating last June from Elphinstone High School, at Gibson, B. C. **Gene Blomgren** was granted a bursary of \$250.00 from the University of B.

C., which he is presently attending.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Blomgren of Gibson, B. C. His mother Olive (Peturson), is a daughter of Mrs. Rosa Petursson and the late Oli Peturson) formerly residents of Wynayrd, Sask.

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**Bill Thorsteinson**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Thorsteinson, 108 Blackburn Ave. Ottawa, was elected head boy at the annual school elections held at Lisgar Collegiate, Sept. 7. Bill was born in Winnipeg, where he lived until some ten years ago when the family moved to Ottawa, where Mr. Thorsteinson has a position with the Federal Government. Bill's younger brother is also prominent in school activities, particularly in dramatics.

## Honorary Degree Conferred on Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson



Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson

One of the main features of the celebration of the Seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the University of Manitoba was the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, upon fourteen Canadian citizens who have performed signal public service. Very appropriately the list includes the name of Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson.

The honour conferred on Dr. Thorlakson is merited on many counts. He is one of the leading surgeons of Canada and his reputation in his profession has spread to the United States and across the Atlantic to Britain and elsewhere, not to mention Iceland where he is well known personally as well as in his professional capacity and is a Commander of the Order of the Falcons. He is a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (M.R.C.S.), a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada (F.R.C.S.), a Fel-

low of the American College of Surgeons (F.A.C.S.), and a Fellow of the American Surgical Society. He was one of the founders of the Manitoba Institute for the Advancement of Medical Education and Research and has been chairman of the Western division of the National Research Council of Canada.

Early in the practice of his profession Dr. Thorlakson could see the need for the establishment of a general medical and surgical clinic in Winnipeg—where physicians and surgeons, specialists in the various branches of the practice of medicine, could pool their professional skills and knowledge, and jointly acquire the most modern and complete medical equipment. He was the founder of the Winnipeg Clinic and at present is its Director and the Chief of the Surgical Division. The growth of that institution, from its small beginning to the largest medical clinic in Canada, is a veritable saga which cannot be told on this occasion. At the present time the clinic comprises forty medical men and a personnel of one hundred and thirty on the non-medical staff.

There are other grounds upon which this honour is merited. In the announcement from the University of the recipients of the Lld. degree, it is stated that Dr. Thorlakson is "chairman of the foundation committee of the chair in Icelandic language and literature at the University and president of the National Cancer Institute of Canada."

The Icelandic ethnic group and all others interested in the establishment of the Department of Icelandic in the University are particularly pleased with this honour bestowed upon Dr.

Thorlakson. The University of Manitoba has in this way given recognition to the splendid work done by Dr. Thorlakson as Chairman of the Foundation Committee for the raising of the Endowment Fund of two hundred thousand dollars needed for the establishment on a permanent basis of the Chair in Icelandic.

All citizens of Canada will rejoice in the recognition given to Dr. Thorlakson for his services in behalf of the Cancer Institute of Canada. He has

been a prominent and active member of the Institute from its inception and now is the president. The people of Canada owe a deep debt of gratitude to leaders in the medical profession who are giving so generously of their time and knowledge in combatting that dread disease.

Congratulations, Dr. Thorlakson! In your selfless service you provide an example which others might well follow.

W. J. L.

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## University of Manitoba Celebrates Seventy-Five Years

At the special convocation held October 28, at the Civic Auditorium to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the University of Manitoba, which was attended by over 4,000 persons, the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, Canada's first native-born governor-general, gave the convocation address.

He emphasized the growing neglect of the humanities in higher education saying: "The humanities are not objects of academic charity. They still hold their central place as the studies through which any understanding of human life must be chiefly, if not exclusively, sought".

When the University of Manitoba was established by the provincial legislature in 1877, it received a grant of \$250.00. At that time the city itself, which celebrated its 75th anniversary three years ago, was little more than a village. It is a remarkable fact, with the pressing needs for material development on every hand, that this frontier community boasted a University before it even had a railroad.

At this time (1877) there were three denominational colleges already operating in the province. They were St.

Boniface College, offering instruction in the French language; the Anglican College of St. John's, outgrowth of a school established in 1820; and Manitoba College, founded as a school in 1847 and a college in 1871, by the Presbyterian Church.

The pressure to establish a university and thus ensure co-operation rather than sectionalism in higher education in the west, came mainly from Alexander Morris, then lieutenant-governor of the province of Manitoba, and it was through his vision and valiant effort that the bill was passed in the legislature in 1877.

Through the years other colleges have become affiliated and new faculties and schools have been established including the fairly recent additions of the University School of Music and the School of Art. Thus the scope and influence of our university has broadened, with a student enrolment at present, of 4,652, including affiliated colleges.

Students from many lands seek out the educational facilities offered by the U. of M. and, at the beginning of November this year, an International

Student's Organization was formed, comprising almost 70 students from 17 different countries.

The Icelanders here have had a long and happy association with the U. of M. through its long list of graduates, scholarship winners, and two Rhodes Scholars; its many professors and research scientists of Icelandic descent; and culminating in the establishment of the Chair of Icelandic language and literature which practically coincides with the 75th anniversary of the University.

As already mentioned, the highlight of the three-day anniversary celebration was the special convocation where fourteen outstanding citizens were presented with the degree of Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*), by the new Chancellor, Victor Sifton. Among them were The Right Honorable **Vincent Massey**, P.C., C.H., M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., Hon. F.R.S.C., Governor-general of Canada; **Victor Sifton**, C.B.E.,

D.S.O., Chancellor of the University of Manitoba, (this degree was conferred by the Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Manitoba, **A. H. S. Gillson**, O.B.E., M.A., LL.D., who also opened the colorful and memorable convocation); and **Paul Henry Thorbjorn Thorlakson**, M.D., C.M., M.R.C.S., F.R.C.S.(C), F.A.C.S., Surgeon.

Memorable, too, for all who were privileged to attend at this historic event, will be the profound words of wisdom uttered by Mr. Massey who has for so long been in the forefront among Canadian cultural leaders and whose work as Chairman of the Massey Commission on the Arts and Sciences is, at least, partially known to all progressive-minded Canadians, if one may judge from the report that the **Massey Report** (on the findings of this commission) is "outselling the best-selling fiction published in Canada".

—H. D.

## Judge Lindal Elected President

The Icelandic Canadian club held its first meeting of the season Oct. 20, in the lower auditorium of the First Federated Church.

The club accepted with regret the resignation of Jon K. Laxdal, who, owing to the heavy pressure of his new duties as assistant principal of the Normal School, felt that at this time he could not devote the time and energy required of the president of such an active organization as the Icelandic Canadian Club.

Judge W. J. Lindal was unanimously elected as president of the Club.

A talk on the Hot Springs of Iceland was given by Prof. Finnbugi Gudmundsson, whose account was both in-

teresting and informative.

Miss Perry Brown and Miss Lois Nichols entertained with piano and vocal solos. Mr. Geo. Nick, Assistant Director of the Manitoba Physical Fitness Program, and a demonstration group of Normal School square dancers made their contribution to the social hour following the program, Mr. Nick being Master of ceremonies. Refreshments were served. Steina Johnson, our much travelled member who is Store Supervisor for Sobie's was at the meeting and was heartily welcomed.

The meeting was greatly enjoyed by over eighty members and their guests, and three new members were welcomed into the club: Dr. Askell Löve, Mrs. David Björnsson and Prof. Finnbugi Gudmundsson.



## Friderick Arlan Olafson, Ph. D.



Frederick Arlan Olafson

Readers of the *Icelandic Canadian*, a magazine devoted to bringing to the attention of the public all phases of Icelandic cultural attainments and development, will be interested in the illustrious and brilliant scholastic career of Frederick Arlan Olafson, Ph.D., who was recently appointed instructor in Philosophy and General Education at Harvard University.

He is the youngest son of the Reverend Kristinn K. Olafson, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Sharon, Wisconsin, a long time president of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America, and his late wife Fridrikka (Sigurgeirsdottir Bjornssonar, and Gudfinnu Johannesdottur, from Tjorn in Adal-Reykjadal, Iceland, died Nov., 12th 1942). He was born at Mountain, N. Dak., Sept. 1st 1924. In 1930 the family moved to Seattle, Wash., where Rev. Olafson served the Calvary Lutheran Church for twelve years. Frederick graduated from Ballard High School with the highest standing in a group of about five hundred. In his

last year at High School he entered an interstate competition, involving high school students from every state in the Union, and then won the so called **National Scholarship**, which granted him free tuition and maintenance at any of the universities of the country. He selected Harvard University, and enrolled there in the fall of 1941. In his second year at Harvard he won the much coveted "**Jacob Wendel Scholarship**," and so distinguished himself in the study of languages, among them Japanese, that upon enlisting in the U.S. Navy in 1943, he was immediately placed in the service of the Department of Naval Intelligence. In 1946 he was discharged from the Navy, and continued his studies at Harvard. In 1947 he took the B.A. degree, and the M.A., the following year. In 1950 he was granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, after submitting a thesis entitled: "Study in the Physicalistic Theory of Mind." Having completed the work required for the Master's degree he was given the **Treschermacher Traveling Scholarship**, whereupon he spent a year in study at the University of Paris, and travelled extensively on the continent. Upon receiving the Doctor's degree he was granted the **Fulbright Scholarship**, which gave him the opportunity of a year's study at Oxford University. He spent the winter at Magdalen College, but during the summer vacation he travelled again on the continent, visiting Greece, Yugoslavia, etc. Last June he was married to Allie Lewis of New York City, who also was abroad on a Fulbright Scholarship. These scholarships are issued by the State Department of the U. S. A., but are named after the Senator who drafted the bill creating them.

The above is indeed an imposing catalogue of scholastic attainments, possible only to those endowed with superior mental ability. But young Dr. Olafson is not only a scholar, but a man of excellent personality, modest,

friendly and sincere. Considering his scholastic record, his background and personality, one may expect to hear more about him in the years to come.

V. J. E.

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## The Flight of Geese

by Elma P. Helgason

'Twas harvest time, I stooked the bounteous yield,  
The hush of eve suffused the sweet, crisp air,  
The humming binder vanished down the field,  
And left the bundles lying everywhere.

I paused a while, to view the sunset glow,  
Relaxing limbs grown weary with the heat;  
When to my ears, there came in accents low,  
The distant call of geese, both sad and sweet,

I looked, and saw athwart the blazoned sky,  
Dark forms take shape, in two distinctive bands,  
Two V-shaped flocks of wild geese up on high,  
In flight from out their northern nesting lands.

A call, a pause—and then a call again,  
Now two, now one, now three, and sometimes more;  
Echoes of rapture, tinged with depths of pain, —  
So clear to me the air their voices bore.

In true formation, stately, solemn, grand;  
I could but thrill to see that V-shaped row,  
One can so see our Great Creator's Hand,  
Just in the fact that wild geese travel so.

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# Paul Reykdal, Community Leader

by W. Kristjanson



**Paul Reykdal**

A memorial dedication service was held at Lundar, September 21, 1952, under the auspices of the Lundar Community Club and the Grettir Amateur Athletic Association, for the unveiling of a portrait of Paul Reykdal, outstanding community leader.

Paul Reykdal is undoubtedly the most outstanding community leader Lundar district has known in the sixty-five years of its history. He was prominent in the social life of the community, in municipal affairs, politics, temperance work, and in the field of sports and athletics. In short, he gave inspiration and leadership in fostering and promoting a healthy community life. He was also a prominent business man.

The life story of no individual can be properly understood or appreciated without knowledge of the community background and the story of Paul

Reykdal can not be told without some account of the Lundar settlement.

Lundar was first settled in 1887, when ten Icelandic settlers moved in. In 1888 nine, and in 1889 a further nine settlers followed. At this time the western part of the Inter-Lake district was just being opened up. In addition to the Roman Catholic Mission at St. Laurent and the Hudson's Bay Co. trading post at Oak Point, there was the nucleus of an English settlement at Seamo, some six miles to the south, and a small French community a few miles to the west, as well as a few other isolated groups at a distance. Trade was chiefly with Winnipeg, a distance of around 80 miles.

The story of the early pioneers has oft been told, and it was told by Paul Reykdal himself at the Diamond Anniversary of the settlement. They had hardly anything except the will to work and the optimistic spirit of getting along the best they could. There were one, two or three cows to a family; the family that had a yoke of oxen and two or three cows was considered well to do. The early log cabins were plastered with clay, and had a sod roof and mother earth for a floor. Hay was cut at first with a scythe and raked with a home-made rake.

Paul Reykdal arrived in the Lundar district in 1889, with his parents, Arni Jonsson Reykdal and Helga Jonsdottir, pioneers of 1887. Born in Reykholtsdal, Borgarfjordur, Iceland, July 3, 1878, Paul was then eleven years of age. He thus saw the settlers arrive and he grew up with the community.

The Lundar settlement filled in rapidly and there was an early and vigorous development of community

life. A hall was built in 1892-93, and there concerts and dances were held and Farmers' Institute and Debating Society meetings, in which Paul was prominent, and there was boxing and wrestling. In 1893, a school was built, but Paul's passing acquaintance with formal education was during the Winnipeg years, 1887-89. His real acquaintance with books was in the home. Reading, including reading aloud, was the most general recreation in the Lundar homes in the early years, as in other Icelandic settlements. Books were loaned around and read and re-read. Young Paul developed a passion for literature. His love of poetry was such that he knew a book of poetry by heart from cover to cover. He read the Bible, with an independent mind. "In the winter of 1893 I read the Bible from cover to cover, and some chapters I read more than once when I found it difficult to reconcile one chapter with another".

In 1904 the railroad reached Oak Point. Two young men from Lundar, Paul Reykdal and Johann Halldorson, promptly opened stores there. After 1908, he devoted himself more exclusively for some time to his farm in the Lundar district.

In 1915, Paul Reykdal, D. J. Lindal, and S. Einarson established the Lundar Trading Company, at Lundar. Trade was in merchandise, hay, grain, fish, and cattle. The turnover in the first years was about 200,000 dollars, and in 1921 or 1922 about 800,000 dollars.

At this time their annual purchase of fish along the Lundar line was about one million pounds.

The early settlers were keenly interested in politics. "We fought our battles with all the vigor and aggressiveness that we brought to everything else", said Paul. At first the settlement was

solidly Liberal. Then a few Conservatives began to appear. One of these was the youthful Paul Reykdal, who assumed leadership in this field. Through the years of his residence in the district, Paul was the most prominent Conservative organizer and worker in the Icelandic communities in the western part of the Inter-Lake district. The party gained strength. Most assuredly he would have been the successful candidate for the Provincial legislature, in 1912, following the resignation of B. L. Baldwinson, but for the fact that party interests dictated that E. L. Taylor should be provided with a seat. When Paul was candidate, in 1915, the tide had turned against his party in the Provincial field, and he suffered defeat. Arthur Meighen appreciated his support in the federal field.

Active in bringing about the organization of the Coldwell municipality, 1913, Paul served as councillor, and he was reeve, 1920-1928.

Paul took a leading part in the social life of the community. He was active in the Good Templars lodge "Framþrá" and he was active in founding the lodge "Berglindin", in the Shoal Lake district. He was a frequent debater, and in his debating he combined logic and humor. He was ever in demand at concerts as an entertainer, with his wealth of popular ballad songs, including Harry Lauder favorites.

Specially remembered is Paul Reykdal's contribution in the field of sports and athletics. He took keen delight in sport and was an outstanding sprinter and wrestler, and he won the Glíma championship at the Icelandic celebration, about 1905. His name is synonymous with the founding of the Grettir Amateur Athletic Association,



and he was the Club's enthusiastic mentor during its best years.

In 1908 Clemens, Arnason and Palmason donated a trophy to be held for one year by the individual champion at the Icelandic Day Celebration. This cup was first won by Kristján Backman, in 1908; in 1910 and 1911 by Einar Johnson; in 1912 by Einar Johnson and Bjorgvin Stefanson, jointly; in 1913 by Einar Johnson, who thus gained permanent possession. These three athletes were from the Lundar-Shoal Lake district.

In 1913 there was a new development in Icelandic Celebration sports. Athletic clubs from the different communities were invited to compete for the newly donated Oddson Shield. The Hanson cup was donated for individual track and field competition, and the Hannesson Belt for the Icelandic Glíma.

The Grettir Club, in competition with Winnipeg and Selkirk, lost the Oddson Shield by one point, in 1913, but in 1915 the club had more points than Winnipeg and Selkirk combined, and for ten consecutive years they held the shield. The Hanson shield was won three times by Einar Johnson, and subsequently by his team-mates, Gusti Magnusson and Oscar Thorgilsson. The Club was also active in baseball, football, and hockey.

Paul was the moving spirit in the forming of the Manitoba Fish Pool, a co-operative organization, in 1928, and he was president during its short period of operation. The head office was in Winnipeg and at this time he made his home there. Subsequent to

the Fish Pool venture, he was chief owner and manager of the Viking Fisheries Company in Winnipeg.

During his years in Winnipeg Paul demonstrated his intellectual keenness and undying competitive spirit in becoming one of the best players of the Winnipeg Bridge Club. He was one of the best chess players in the Lundar district.

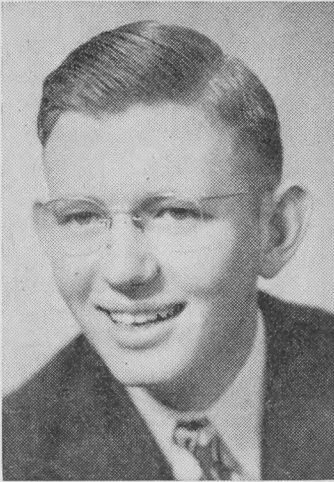
Paul Reykdal's interest in his home district never failed. In 1947, he was the main speaker at the Diamond Jubilee of the Lundar Community, and in 1950 he stood on a Lundar platform and threw out the challenge of clean sport and clean community life. He was prominently associated with the publication of the Lundar Diamond Jubilee book in 1948.

As homestead inspector for the federal government prior to the First World War, and as a political worker, Paul had occasion to travel extensively in the Inter-Lake district, and he knew every man, woman, and child in the community. He had many good friends. "I loved the ease with which he made friends and kept them", one of his sons has said. He was always ready to lend a helping hand and did so on many occasions to many people. He had a happy family life.

Paul Reykdal's contribution is enhanced in perspective by the recollection that it was made in the formative and more difficult years of his community, as well as in its years of flowering. Young in spirit to the moment of his death, in 1951, he was a pioneer. All through the years, he lived a full life.

*Subscribe to the Icelandic Canadian*

## Young Doctor and Naturalist



Clarence Stuart Houston graduated in Medicine from the University of Manitoba in May, 1951. Stuart is the son of Dr. C. J. Houston and Dr. Sigga Houston of Yorkton, Sask. His mother, nee Sigga Christianson, was the first Icelandic woman to graduate in medicine from a Canadian university.

Stuart was born at Williston, N. D. September 26, 1927. He attended public school and Collegiate in Yorkton, Sask.

In his Collegiate career, he placed first in grade IX, X, XI. In grade XII he won the Governor General's Medal in competition with comparable Collegiates of Saskatchewan. While in grade XI he won the Collegiate Oratorical Contest, took part in dramatics, and the Air Cadets. He was a troop leader in the Boy Scouts. In 1945 he was Managing Director of the Rotary Hobby Fair.

Stuart has always been keenly interested in Natural History. While still in his teens, he was Secretary Treasurer of the Yorkton Natural History Society, and assisted in publication of

the "Blue Jay" which has since become the official organ of the Sask. Natural History Society. During his holidays, he has pursued his hobby of bird banding and, in this connection has banded 6,000 ducks for Ducks Unlimited. His scientific work "Birds of Yorkton and District" was published in the Canadian Field Naturalist in 1949.

Stuart took his pre-med and medical course at the University of Manitoba and interned in the Winnipeg General Hospital. He served as Medical Representative on the council of the U.M.S. U. for three years.

As far as we know Stuart is the first student to graduate in Medicine from the University of Manitoba whose parents are both medical graduates of that University.

Since graduating, he is practising with his parents at Yorkton, as the medical firm of Drs. Houston, Houston and Houston. In August, 1951, he married Miss Mary Belcher, B.A., B. Ed., (University of Sask.) They have an infant son, Stanley Clarence.

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## Arborg Stud. Wins Scholarship

Gudrun Skulason of Geysir, Man., and a student at the Arborg High School won the Roger Goulet Scholarship of \$75.00 last spring in grade XI. She is at present studying grade XII at Arborg. She is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Skulason, of Geysir, Man. Her mother, Hrund Skulason, (a sister of Heimir Thorgrimsson, who has served on the Icel. Can. Mag. staff) is a daughter of Mrs. Sigrun Thorgrimsson, of Winnipeg and the late Rev. Adam Thorgrimsson.

## Reception for Students

Judge W. J. Lindal, president of the Icelandic Canadian Club, and Mrs. Lindal entertained at a social gathering at their home on the evening of November 10. Over 100 persons were present, among them being 74 students of Icelandic extraction, who are attending the University of Manitoba, its affiliated colleges, the Normal School, or taking nurses training at Winnipeg hospitals.

Together with the hosts, members of the executive of the Icelandic Canadian club were on hand to greet the students and assist them in getting acquainted with each other.

In his address of welcome to the students Judge Lindal expressed the hope that this gathering would prove to be the beginning of a closer association among the students of Icelandic descent. He recalled how the Icelandic students of his day had organized a students society in Wninipeg, which had been of benefit in developing the natural talents of the students themselves and had served to augment their interest in the Icelandic language and literature, and thus enabled them to add to the cultural effort of the Icelandic communiti as a whole.

"Now it is our hope", he said, "that through this meeting to-night may be created some such organization among yourselves and that your effort may in some way be coordinated with those of other organizations here that are working to preserve the best in our Icelandic heritage.

From the students present Judge

Lindal called at random on about twenty to give their impromptu opinion on this matter. All were in accord with the general idea and expressed their gratitude to their hosts for this opportunity to meet each other. The last speaker, Alan Johnson, who graduated last spring, very generously offered a representative group of the students to meet at his home November 23, to further discuss and develop this idea.

Judge Lindal then introduced a number of guests, the following of whom spoke briefly, all agreeing with the soundness of Judge Lindal's idea: Rev. V. J. Eylands, Prof. F. Gudmundsson, Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, Dr. T. J. Olson, Rev. P. M. Petursson and E. P. Jonsson.

Members of the executive of the I.C.C. and the Magazine staff helped the hostess in serving a delightful lunch, while the students and guests had the opportunity of moving about and meeting each other. The executive had volunteered their cars for conveying students in residence at the University, United College, The Normal School, as well as many others, to the gathering and home again.

The reception was an outstanding success as a social gathering for the students and as a timely effort to stimulate them in extra-curricular activities and in making a contribution to the united effort which is required for the preservation of the Icelandic tradition, language and literature. **H. D.**

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WINNIPEG CANADA

## Centenary Celebration in Utah

On October 4, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of the coming of the Scandinavians to Utah, with an elaborate pageant held at the Hotel Utah in Salt Lake City. The pageant was built around the cultural and material contributions made to the community and the State by the pioneers who came from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

(The first Icelanders did not come to Spanish Fork until 1856).

As part of the program a dramatization was given of the life of Theo. Didrickson, (Þórður Diðriksson) an Icelander who came to Utah in 1856. Francis Johnson Clark, a girl of Icelandic descent from Springville, Utah, was soloist for that part of the program devoted to the Icelandic pioneers. She appeared in Icelandic festive costume and sang the Icelandic Millennial hymn in Icelandic and English.

Helen Kimball, a young woman prominent in dramatics in Salt Lake City, was chosen as reader or commentator for the whole pageant. Spotlighted on the stage, outlined in a frame, she represented a picture of the past, arrayed in a Scandinavian costume. She gave a dramatic account of the contributions of the pioneers, as each country in turn came on the stage and portrayed its specific cultural tradition. Miss Kimball gave a very good account of the first Icelandic families who came to Utah in 1856, and later immigrants from Iceland. She told about their contribution to the well-being of the State and paid glowing tribute to their intellectual contribution in particular.

A very large gathering enjoyed this cultural and historic event and a high percentage of the descendants of the Icelanders were in attendance.

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### WANTED

We wish to thank those who responded so promptly to our request for copies of the magazine. This made it possible to sell extra full sets for which there is an increasing demand. We will pay 50 cents per copy or half-a-year's subscription for each of the following issues: Vol. 1, No. 1; Vol. 1, No. 3; Vol. 2, No. 3. Mail to: The Icelandic Canadian, 869 Garfield St., Wpg.

★ ★ ★

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from: Mrs. H. F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St., Winnipeg, Canada.

★ ★ ★

### CORRECTION

In the summer issue of the *Icelandic Canadian* (vol. 10, No. 4, p. 28) there was an error in the feature about Ofeigur Sigurdson, two letters being missing from the quotation on the Stephan G. Stephansson monument. The quotation should read as follows: "Að hugsa' ekki í árum en öldum Að alheimta' ei daglaun að kvöldum, því svo lengist mannsæfin mest."

In the Autumn issue of the *Icel. Can.* (Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 30) there was a slight error in "Iceland's Fjallkona Visits Flin Flon. Correction: Mrs. G. O. Bergman's grandfather was Brynjólfur Jónsson, of Hecla (Big Island) Man.

## Balance Between Mind and Matter

Vilhjálmur P. Gíslason, who is Director of the Commercial College of Iceland, in Reykjavík, came to Winnipeg November 7, and gave a lecture in Icelandic in the First Lutheran Church Nov. 6, sponsored by the Icelandic National League. Rev. V. J. Eylands, president, was chairman and the speaker was introduced by Prof. Finnþogi Gudmundson.

Mr. Gíslason spoke on "Athafnir og Andlegt líf á Íslandi", and gave many good examples to show how the present generation of Iceland has endeavored to strike a balance between material growth and cultural advancement.

"As you all know", he said, "material progress in the last few years has been phenomenal, as much of the money pouring into the country from the favorable trade surpluses during the war was used for improvement of existing industries; the establishment of new ones; and for public works. An excess of money always tends to cause extravagance, especially at first. But on the whole", said Mr. Gíslason, "the benefit to the country from this money and from the Marshall loan, has been of a lasting and permanent nature.

"But in this sudden rush for material wealth and well-being, the Icelanders have not forgotten to cling to their age-old cultural values", he continued. "In fact it has been charged in some quarters that they are unduly concerned with such matters. For example, the herring industry having practically failed for seven consecutive years, there was a loud protest from all sides when there was talk of sinking further large sums of money into new trawlers, but hardly a ripple of dissent over the grant to education. During my stay

here in America, I have received information about the new government budget just being brought down, and the largest single item in it is the allotment for education and cultural enterprises, such as subsidies to writers, artists, etc.

"The National theatre, which has 700 seats gives excellent performances by local talent and visiting artists, and is well patronized. Painters and musicians flourish, and generally speaking the people spend proportionately much for cultural pursuits and entertainment."

Mr. Gíslason pointed to the growing interest in building up a finer National Museum in Iceland; to the infant mortality, Iceland having the lowest rate, barring New Zealand. He mentioned the high ratio of books published, but said that literature was not the only enterprise indulged in by the Icelanders. "There have been great strides of progress taken in medicine, industry, science and commerce.

"The study of Genealogy and Law are the oldest sciences of Iceland", he said, and pointed out that the Icelanders could trace the genealogy of Queen Elizabeth II, of England, to *Auðunarstaðir* in Viðidal, Iceland.

"The present outlook in Iceland", he said "is to foster and build the best possible material progress, but always with due reverence for the advancement of cultural pursuits."

He concluded with a very inspiring message to all who try to work for culture whether it be on a national scale or community basis.

"We must always have the dreamer of ideals, the visionary who creates in

his mind, and builds up the esthetic values for his generation and for the future, as we must also have the **doer**, the energetic worker, who hustles along our progress, in the material world. But the measure of the worth of our civilization is how we have struck a proper balance between material progress and true cultural values."

Mr. Gíslason had come to America Sept. 27, under the cultural program of the State Dpt. of the U. S. A. (his brother Gylfi, was here recently in a similar capacity. See Icel. Can. Aut-

umn. 1952), to observe and study in particular, the trends and developments in radio, theatre and commercial training, as these are the fields he has been specially active in. He is chairman of the council of the National Theatre and has been for many years a director of the State owned Icel. Radio, as well as keen observer of the national scene in his long career as radio news commentator. He is also a well established writer, having written several books, and compiled historical collections.

—H. D.

## Dr. Arnason Promoted to Ottawa Post



**Dr. Arni Pall Arnason**, head of the federal entomological laboratory at the University of Sask., in Saskatoon, since 1946, has been appointed Associate Head with Dr. H. L. Seamans, of the field crop insect investigation unit in the division of Entomology at Ottawa, and left October 22, to take over his new position in the Canadian capital.

At Ottawa, Dr. Arnason will be responsible for directing research pro-

grams on soil infesting insects and ecological investigations conducted in fourteen federal crop laboratories across Canada.

Dr. Arnason was born at Brown (Morden) Man., where his parents, Thordur and Sigurrós Arnason pioneered. His mother was a daughter of the N. Dak. pioneers Thomas and Guðrún Johannsson. His paternal grandparents were Arni Sigurðsson (author of "Í Breiðdal fyrir sextíu árum") who lived at Eyvindarstaðir in Vopnafjörður, Iceland, and his wife Kristjana Soffia Stefánsdóttir (Vigfússon).

Dr. Arnason is married to the former Elizabeth Madeleine Heiss, Ph.D. in Entomology, who was a professor at Colorado State College in 1938. They have four children.

The Arnason family moved from Morden to a farm in the Wadena district, (Mozart) Sask., when Dr. Arnason was a young lad. He entered the U. of Sask. in 1925 and in 1927 became a student assistant in the entomology laboratory there. He graduated in 1929 and became a full time



science worker in the laboratory. In 1931 he received his master's degree at the U. of Sask., and in 1942 his doctor's degree at the U. of Illinois. He succeeded Dr. K. M. King as head of the Saskatoon laboratory in 1946. In 1949 he was sent to England and France to visit leading British and French Entomologists and Research Institutions. At that time Dr. Arnason spent three months in Europe, which he says was a most valuable experience and an interesting tour. He has a brother, Professor Thomas J. Arnason in the Dept. of Biology, U. of Sask., Saskatoon.

Under the supervision of Dr. Arna-

son the laboratory at Saskatoon developed the first practical chemical seed treatment for the control of wireworms in small grains.

In recent years he has directed research using radioactive isotopes to study insect behavior. This development has made it possible to follow the movement of wire worms and cutworms underground and to trace the dispersal of black-flies, grasshoppers and mosquitoes.

One of the current investigations in progress at the Saskatoon laboratory deals with control of the flax boll worm, a pest which is a comparative newcomer to the province.

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## Caroline Appointed Editor



**Caroline Gunnarsson**, former member of the **Icelandic Canadian** staff has now the position of Editor of the Women's section for the **Free Press Weekly Prairie Farmer**. This is an important post needing a person of wide interests, an alert sense of values, a quick mind to pin-point and highlight the interesting things in everyday life

which will catch the fancy of her readers, especially the progress-minded farm women, and a facile pen for expressing the keen and witty ideas she wishes to get across.

After working for three years as reporter and editor of a column for the **Shaunavon Standard** in Saskatchewan, Caroline started in her new position with the **Free Press Weekly Prairie Farmer**, (The Newspaper of the Canadian Farm", published by the Winnipeg Free Press) at the beginning of October. She edits, and is responsible for the five-page section titled, **The Canadian Woman's Notebook**, which she starts off with a page of brightly chatty discourse on various subjects. This is followed by a variety of items of interest to women and farm housewives in particular, including notes on special achievements of farm women, fashions, household hints, intriguing incidents in the lives of women of other lands, news of cur-

rent progress in the sphere of women's activities, etc.

It is easy to see that Caroline loves her work, and she is just the type of person to do her best when given a free hand with some creative project. Her enthusiasm and human interest fairly bubbles into her writing and every subject seems to take on a bit of

extra sparkle from her vital treatment of it.

Happily we have renewed our evening sessions of discussions with Caroline at 869 Garfield St. (for further particulars about her see Icel. Can., spring 1949). She has promised us an item for the Magazine in the near future. Congratulations, Caroline, and welcome back to Winnipeg.—H. D.

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## From Los Angeles

Clayton Nash, the new president of the Icelandic-American Club has sent us a copy of a small mimeographed paper or news-letter that the club is launching for the purpose of keeping up contacts among club members and Icelandic community in general, and to keep them apprised of various social activities about to happen in the Icelandic circle.

The paper is to appear twice a month and the subscription is \$1.00 for four monthss, or 25 cents per copy. It is called "Félags Blaðið", with captions of sections, such as "Fréttir, Tíðindi, Samtíningur, etc. although the paper is otherwise entirely in the English language.

This little "Félags Blað" published in the interest of more good times together", as the title page says, is three typewritten, and mimeographed sheets of yellow paper of regulation business size (8½ by 11) with a drawing of the American flag and a sturdy Viking on page one.

The front page tells about the launching of this experiment in the hope that it will serve to stimulate and

enhance the work of the club. It says in part:

"How about it Icelanders? Shall we stick together and support our club! If you will support the 'Blaðið' we will have more and larger issues. Send in your dollar now! . . . We want to have a healthy, strong and active club, and a club paper can help to make it that!"

The paper then carries news items, announcements of coming events such as the Leif Erickson Festival and the two-day International Institute Festival Oct. 11 and 12th, (which events turned out highly successful). The annual meeting of the club is featured with election, and a presentation made to Mrs. Guðny Thorvaldson last year's president "for the wonderful job she has done for us in the past year".

Several other subscribers of the Icel. Can. kindly sent us copies of the **Félags Blaðið**, which we have passed around to those interested. Our congratulations to the Icelandic-American Club on this enterprise. We hope to see some more copies of the "Blaðið".

Anyone wishing to subscribe, write Clayton Nash, 718 E. Broadway, Hawthorne, Calif.

## IN THE NEWS

### YOUNG STUDENTS HONORED

Two young high school students of Icelandic descent **Beverley Armstrong** and **William Ingimar Crow**, were chosen this fall to participate in the annual Goodwill Exchange of students between Minneapolis and Winnipeg.

William and Beverley left Winnipeg November 9. They were among the five girls and five boys chosen from Daniel MacIntyre Collegiate, where they are students.

The thirty students from three Winnipeg Collegiates were chosen on the basis of their scholastic standing and participation in school activities, to enjoy a week's visit to Minneapolis, as guests of the students of Edison High School there. Next spring a similar number of students will go to Winnipeg on a return visit.

During their visit the young Winnipeggers stayed in the homes of the Minneapolis students, and were taken on tours of schools and industrial plants in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and generally given a very enjoyable time.

Beverley is the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy H. Armstrong, 1019 Dominion St. Her mother, Pauline is a daughter of the late Arni Sigvaldason, from Vopnafjörður, Icel and his wife Guðrún Arason, from Þingeyjarsýsla, who came to Milwaukee with the 1873 group of settlers and later pioneered in Minniota, Minn. (see Saga Isl. V.-heimi, P.P. Þorsteinsson, Vol. 2 p. 146). Guðrún was a sister of the well-known Skapti Arason, Argyle district pioneer.

William Ingimar is the son of Mr.

and Mrs. William Crow, 725 Maryland St. His mother, Kristjana, is the youngest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Tryggvi Ingjaldsson, noted pioneers of New Iceland. They came from North Dakota to pioneer in the western part of the settlement, at Framnes, west of Arborg, Man. Kristjana's only brother Ingimar Ingjaldson, who died in an accident in 1934, was a member of the Manitoba Legislature. A sister, Andrea, Mrs. E. L. Johnson of Arborg is well known for her community activities, particularly in the Federation of Agriculture. Her work has been featured in this Magazine.

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### APPOINTED SEC-MANAGER

**J. Harvey Johnson** has been appointed secretary-manager for the Fort William (Ontario) Chamber of Commerce. He is a newspaper man in that city and has been associated with the Port Arthur News Chronicle for several years.

Mr. Johnson, who was born and raised in Winnipeg, was active in the work of the First Lutheran church, where he served as treasurer of the Sunday School for a number of years. He is the son of the late Stefan Johnson and his wife, Jakobina (Oddson) Johnson, who is now Mrs. Alexander and lives in the Thelmo Mansions, Winnipeg.

The Fort William Times-Journal of October 20, speaks very highly of Mr. Johnson as a most suitable choice for this important office, saying in part:

"Understandably, the work of the Chamber of Commerce embraces the technique of good public relations. Mr. Johnson's training in this field

will stand him in good stead. His associations with all types of citizens, his role as secretary and director of the Thunder Bay District Fish and Game Association, his wide circle of friends and acquaintances should serve the Chamber well.

"The Fort William Chamber has been, and is now handling a larger program of work than ever before. The pleasant aggressiveness of the new manager should match that program."

★

**Mr. Theodore Sigurdson**, principal of Earl Haig Junior High School, Brandon, Man., was elected president of the Western Manitoba Teachers Association, at the annual convention held in October 1952.

Mr. Sigurdson taught at the Jon Bjarnason Academy during the school years of 1928-1929 and 1929-1930. Since then he has been at Erickson, Shoal Lake, Virden, and Brandon, Man.

He is the son of Mrs. Guðrún Sigurdson, now of Vancouver, B. C. and the late Jón Sigurdson. They lived in Brandon, and Bowsman, Man.

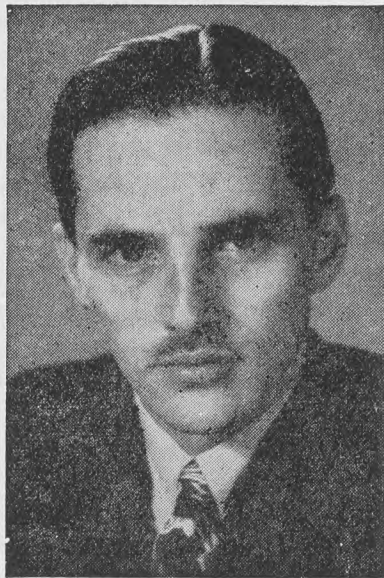
★

**Richard H. Tallman** was last summer elected Fellow of the Society of Actuaries in the United States, after completing his Actuary exams. He lives in Minneapolis and is employed with the North-Western National Life Insurance Co. Mr. Tallman is a graduate of the University of Sask., and a recipient of the Governor-General's Medal. He is a son of Mrs. Augusta J. Tallman, Matron of Betel, the Old Folks' Home at Gimli, and the late Mr. Tallman. His two brothers, Gordon and Stanley, and a sister Lillian, (Mrs. Eric A. Stephens) are also graduates of the U. of Sask. Gordon, B.Sc. in Civil Engineering, is employed with

the Province of Ontario Hydro Electric System; and Stanley is a Research Engineer with the Massey Harris Company in Toronto.

★

## **DR. THORSTEINSON HEADS ENTOMOLOGISTS**



**Dr. Asgeir Jonas Thorsteinson** has been named president of the Entomological Society of Manitoba.

Dr. Thorsteinson was born in Winnipeg, where he received his public and secondary schooling. During his service in the Officers' Training Corps he attended the Imperial College of Science in London, through assistance from the British Council. In 1946 he received his degree of Doctor of Philosophy and was named a Fellow of the Entomological Society of London. He held a position with the Forest Insect Laboratory in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., until coming to the University of Manitoba. Dr. Thorsteinson is a son of Mrs. Halldora Thorsteinson of Winnipeg and the late Sigurdur Thorsteinson. His wife was formerly Mildred Anderson of Winnipeg.



## ELECTED TO EDUCATIONAL OFFICE

Mrs. H. F. Danielson was elected Provincial Educational Secretary at the November meeting of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, which is the largest patriotic and cultural organization in Canada, comprising over 32,000 members.

The primary objectives of the Order are to foster Canadian National unity within the British Commonwealth and to give every assistance in the educational field so that Canadian youth may be properly equipped to become responsible citizens of a democracy, not only through the best facilities in academic and technical education, but also through the steady development of high ethical ideals.

This aim of the I.O.D.E. is being pursued through constant vigilance and contact with the highest educational authorities, and through an annual expenditure on educational projects of more than \$200,000, including a \$2,000 Overseas post graduate Scholarship and a \$1,600 under-graduate bursary awarded annually in each of the ten provinces of Canada.

Mrs. Danielson, as educational secretary, will head this educational program in the Province of Manitoba.

★

Miss Steina Johnson, who still is a loyal and interested member of the Icelandic Canadian Club in spite of her constant travels from coast to coast as Store Supervisor for Sobie's, spent three weeks with her family in Winnipeg this summer and looked up some of the club members. She reported having seen Laura Thordarson (another of our members who holds the same position with Sobie's) at Sault St. Marie, Ont. Laura had just returned

from Iceland where she spent three weeks in company with her father and sister Joie, and where she took several rolls of colored movies which we hope to see some time in the future.

★

## LUNDAR MAN HEADS TEACHERS

Felix K. Sigurdson, principal of the Lundar School, was elected president of the teachers of inspectorial divisions 22 and 23 at their two-day fall convention held at Young United Church, Winnipeg. He is a son of Sigfus and Sigurlaug Sigurdson of Oak Point, Man., and has a brother Kristján Sigurdson who is principal of Chapman School in the Winnipeg suburb of Charleswood. Their father, Sigfus, is a half-brother of the late Stefan and Johannes Sigurdson, well known merchants, and community leaders in the early pioneer settlement of New Iceland.

★

## JOHANNSSON GARDEN WINS TOP AWARD

This fall when three horticultural specialists travelled around the Prov. of Manitoba to judge the best Home Gardens in a province-wide competition, the top award for beauty, utility and artistic organization went to the flower-and-vegetable garden of Mrs. Walter Johannsson at her home in Pine Falls, Man., and she was awarded the Shaughnessy Trophy for this effective beauty spot she has cultivated at her home.

Mrs. Johannsson had previously won first place in the Pine Falls competition for best gardens, and has won several awards for flowers and vegetables at horticultural shows.

Mrs. Johannsson is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Thorvardson of

Winnipeg. Her husband, Walter Johansson, the owner and operator of the Pine Falls Movie theatre and community hall, is the son of Asmundur P. Johannsson of Winnipeg, (who made the outstanding contribution of \$50,000 to the Chair of Icelandic at the U. of Manitoba.) and his first wife, the late Mrs. Sigríður Johannsson.

★

#### **VALTYR EMIL GUDMUNDSON, B.D.**



In June of this year, Valtyr Emil Gudmundson received his Bachelor of Divinity degree, graduating jointly from the Meadville Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago.

During the period, October 1945 to August 1947, Mr. Gudmundson studied in Iceland, being mainly concerned with the study of theology at the University of Iceland.

Upon his return to America he spent two years doing undergraduate work at the University of Chicago. This was followed by two years of theological studies at the Meadville Theological Seminary.

He has been a member of the Council of Unitarian Youth Conference in Western Canada, president of the

Channing Club (Unitarian Youth) at the University of Chicago, and Chairman of the University of Chicago Outing Club, and has received the Remington award for outstanding service.

On October 10, he was ordained as Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Ellsworth, Maine.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bjorgvin Gudmundson of Lundar, Man.

His wife, the former Barbara Rohrke of Ozone, Tenn., holds a degree in zoology from the University of Tennessee and did research work in Chicago. She now has a position at the Jackson Memorial Laboratory, working on original research.

★

#### **FIRST PARK RIVER PHARMACY GRAD.**

Joanne Eyolfson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Eyolfson of Park River, N. Dak., graduated this spring in Pharmacy at the N.D.A.C. School of Pharmacy, at Fargo, and passed the State Board examinations before returning home to Park River where she will be associated with her father in his drug store. She is the first girl of the district to complete a course in Pharmacy.

While at College Miss Eyolfson was president of the Kappa Epsilon, Women's Pharmacy fraternity, and was a member of the Pharmacy club. She was a member of the Beta Sigma and Kappa Delta sororities, the Y.W. CA and the Gold Star Band. In addition she served as president and secretary of the Davis Hall club and ranked high scholastically throughout her college career.

The Eyolfson family resided in Wynyard, Sask., for many years before going to Park River. Her mother formerly, Anna Anderson is of Norwegian descent.

## SCHOLARSHIPS



Miss Evelyn I. Thorvaldson last summer won the Jon Sigurdsson Chapter I.O.D.E. Music Scholarship of \$50.00. This scholarship is awarded in the U. of M. School of Music, to a student of Icelandic extraction who obtains the highest marks (not less than 70%) in piano, violin, voice or violincello, in grades VI to XI inclusive. Evelyn won the award for receiving first class honors (88%) in her grade VIII exams. Her standing during the last few years, has been consistently high, in both piano and theory exams, her marks in theory having been 93% (1947) 96% (Feb. 1952) and 91% (May 1952).

Evelyn has also studied singing, and as soloist or in duets with her mother Mrs. Lilja Thorvaldson (formerly Lilja Sigurgeirsson of Hecla, Man.) has often given delightful entertainment at concerts among the Icelanders. Evelyn, employed with the C.B.C. studios in Winnipeg, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Thorvaldson, 35 Roslyn Rd. Winnipeg. Her father, Thorvald-

ur, is a son of the late Sveinn Thorvaldson, M.B.E. of Riverton and his first wife, the late Margret (Solmundsson) Thorvaldson.

★

## WINS SCHOLARSHIP

Miss Margaret Eirickson of Elfros Sask., a pupil of S. K. Hall, B. Mus., was recently awarded the University scholarship in piano, grade XIII. She received the highest mark in the province for advanced artistic playing. Margaret is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Eirickson of Elfros. Her mother, Anna, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. Magnusson of Wynyard, Sask.

★

Dorothy Mae Jonasson, who left this fall for her second year of violin study at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto, has been awarded a special bursary of \$100.00 by the Conservatory, for the current year. She was one of four students to receive this award.

In 1951 Dorothy was granted a tuition scholarship by Elie Spivak, eminent violin teacher at the Royal Conservatory, and again this fall, she was the recipient of a \$325.00 tuition award from Mr. Spivak, who is her teacher. She had previously won the Jon Sigurdson Musical Scholarship of \$50.00. She is a daughter of Mrs. Laura Jonasson of Winnipeg, and the late S. O. Jonasson, who passed away suddenly last October.

★

Miss Marian E. Martin, a second year student at United College, was the recipient of the United Church Women's Auxiliary bursary of \$100.00, at the College Commencement exercises held Nov. 6. In addition to her general proficiency as a student she

has shown marked leadership qualities, working with the Young People's society of Young United church and as leader of the Explorers, who are girls in the age group of 9 to 11.

Marian is also a senior music student, having last spring received her A.R.C.T. (Associate of the Royal Conservatory, Toronto). She studied music at St. Mary's Academy, and is continuing with her musical career. Marion moved to Winnipeg from LeRoy, Sask., two years ago after her father George H. Martin passed away. She lives with her mother at 154 Spence St. Her mother was formerly Margaret Einarsson, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Einarsson. Her grandfather, Johannes Einarsson was an outstanding pioneer in the Lögberg (Sask.) settlement and has been featur-

ed in the Icelandic Canadian. (Vol. 4, No. 2 p. 20.) ★

**Gail Johnson** was awarded a \$15 scholarship by the Alumni of the Royal Conservatory of Music in her recent grade five examination.

Gail is 12 years old, and her nine-years-old sister, Sharon has also won a music scholarship, the Frederick Harris scholarship of \$25.00 and a silver medal for having the highest marks in Manitoba in grade I. They both take music at St. Mary's Academy.

Gail and Sharon are daughters of Dr. and Mrs. A. V. Johnson of Winnipeg, and granddaughters of the late Mr. and Mrs. Albert C. Johnson, of Winnipeg. Albert Johnson was for many years Consul for Iceland and Denmark in Western Canada.

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## Vilhjalmur Stefansson

(Continued from Page 13)

Inscrutable to all but him whose soul  
Is thrilled with inspiration, and sees roll  
The cloud of darkness off on every hand,  
Cast your eyes hither and behold where stand  
Milton and I, the present and the past  
Masters of lofty song, conjoined at last.  
His theme was God, the universe and man,  
But mine is hash; and doubt whoever can  
That I, the later and the greater bard,  
Choose me a theme by far, yea doubly hard,  
To grasp and to digest and understand.  
Where'er ye look are proofs on every hand  
That earth was made for man. But who dare stand  
In idiotic boldness and declare  
What hash is made of? Earth and sea and air  
Yield to us traces of their origin;  
But not the oldest nor the wisest men  
Know aught what hash is made of. Sometimes trace  
Is found, indeed, of garlic and of maize,  
Of sweet and sour potatoes, greasy pork  
That erst was baked with beans. Again the fork  
Turns up a cabbage or a crumb  
Of bread, well rounded by a Chinese thumb,  
A piece of beef that's twice been through a stew,



And even some older hashes with the new  
 In deft proportion blended. Chemistry  
 Stands baffled at this depthless mystery.  
 The same, the endless, the eternal round,  
 It sweepeth day by day. With it are found,  
 Stepping the march of monotone, a few  
 Inseparable comrades, doomed 'tis true  
 To dissolution, and to merge at last  
 Into the boundless, the measurless vast  
 Of hash.

V. Stefansson

He was one of the founders of the A. D. T. Literary Society at this school, which encouraged creative, literary work. Some of Stef's poems were published in *The Student*, the University paper. Included among these early writings were the Poems: "Philosophy at Twenty", "Science", and "Walt Whitman".

Stef completed his assignments in a fraction of the time required by an average student, and did an outstanding bit of scholastic work, which is often the lot of the erudite student. One classmate writes that Stef mastered all the higher mathematics that he could get in school and that he completed the first year of Greek alone, with practically no help from a tutor. This precocious student was also an unorthodox student and many exaggerated accounts and legends have been told about his ultimate suspension from the University in March, 1902. He was a non-conformist in class attendance and dormitory rules which contributed to the final decision of suspension.

One of the legends—which may contain more truth than fiction—tells about Stef being downtown about dinner time, one winter evening, looking for a ride out to the University. He saw President Merrifield's carriage waiting at a corner and, pulling his coat collar up, hopped into the carriage and asked the driver to take him home. The unsuspecting driver did as

he was told, and Stef had a ride out to the campus.

An amusing true story concerns his late return to school in the fall, equipped with a primus stove, tea and crackers, all of which was in contravention to the rules. Many of the boys had flocked to Stef's room to welcome him back and were informing him of the stringent and antiquated rules which had been posted. The group was enjoying a snack of tea and crackers when they heard the proctor approaching the room. The guests fled more or less ungracefully, and Stef stood alone munching a cracker. Scowling heavily, the proctor asked if he had not read the rules.

'Yes', said Stef, 'and I noticed that they are outdated'.

'Do you know who I am?' said the proctor.

'No,' Stef replied, 'but judging by appearances, you must be a freshman!'

There was a bit of drama with the suspension, however, when some of Stef's intimate friends organized a "funeral procession" and listened to the "sermon" delivered by Stef standing on a box in front of Old Main building. Then Stef was seated in a wheelbarrow and paraded by the "mourners" from Old Main to the edge of the campus.

This concluded this year's stay at school and Stef was faced with an immediate need for gainful employment.

This situation was relieved by a turn as a reporter for **The Plaindealer** at Grand Forks.

Later in the spring, Stef's attention was called to the fact that the Democratic party had not decided on a candidate for the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Dakota. Stef sought and won this nomination. To carry on a campaign would have necessitated funds which he did not possess, and to meet this obstacle he called on his opponent, W. L. Stockwell, and proposed that neither candidate carry on a campaign but that they sit back and let the electorate decide. This agreement did not solve all the problems, however, as someone discovered that Stef was too young to qualify, and he was automatically eliminated.

The time was approaching to make definite plans for the completion of his undergraduate work, and Stef had decided to continue his work at some other University. In the fall he went to Iowa City, Iowa to apply for enrollment at that school. During his interview with the registrar, the latter inquired as to whether Stef was a former student, since he looked familiar. His recognition had been gained from a newspaper where he had seen Stef's picture as a candidate for the state office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. This terminated the interview, and Stef was enrolled at the University of Iowa.

Here, too, Stef's erudition made a real impression. One fellow classmate made this observation: "His intellectual ability certainly amazed some of us dumb clucks of the class of 1903".\*)

\*) Letter, C. H. Edmondson, Honolulu, Hawaii, February 27, 1951.

"In one year he completed four separate courses in Scandinavian, to which were added: Latin, German, English, Mathematics and History. On the extra-curricular side, the senior yearbook of 1903 lists him as a member of the Philomathian Literary Society and as President of Edda, a Literary society composed of Scandinavian-Americans, the name of which is Icelandic. As a senior, he was elected to membership in a senior honorary society known in those days as "Scimitar and Fez", but is now identified as the local chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa, the national honorary senior leadership society composed of outstanding senior men".\*\*)

Fred Harris relates this anecdote, which he thinks is characteristic of Stef's generosity. "In the Philomathian Society it was the rule that only Seniors could be elected President or Vice-President and serve as such. In the spring of 1903, I was elected President and Stefansson Vice-President. It had always been customary for the President, immediately after his election, to take the entire personnel of the society to some restaurant, and buy them a feed; a duty which severely taxed the financial resources of most of us and myself in particular. I recall, on this occasion, after the election, Stefansson came to me and said, "I don't know how much of an honor it is to be elected Vice-president, but I will pay one-third of the cost of the supper and reduce the expense by that much." I can assure you, that under the status of my finances, this was gratefully received."

Was Stef's year at Iowa City marked only by diligence and scholarship? No. He entered into the social activities of

\*\* Letter, Loren Hickerson, Iowa City, Iowa, February 10, 1951.

the class quite freely. Neither was he above entering into some of the other pranks which traditionally mark the college undergraduate. F. Harris continues: "Rather late one evening, he and I, together with another undergraduate were out on the streets of Iowa City when we discovered a newly erected sign that one of the restaurants had displayed. We were, of course, obsessed with the idea that we should purloin it, and at considerable risk succeeded in so doing. I don't recall who was the ringleader in the matter, but apparently all of us were of one mind about the desirability of procuring the sign." \*\*\*

One of Stef's long-time friends says that Stef enjoyed a prank successfully played on him, as much as participating in one. Perhaps this narrative, by Harris, will substantiate that observation: "Stef roomed with one Arthur McLane of Larimore North Dakota, who came with him to Iowa City from the U. of North Dakota. Charles Hamil, a classmate from North Dakota came to Iowa City to visit them. This made it necessary that one of them get another place to sleep, so Stefansson was to stay with Jesse Resser, a classmate of ours, and a classmate of mine at our High School in Perry, Iowa. Stefansson and Resser planned, in our presence, to go to the May morning breakfast the following morning. Another classmate and Society brother, Ray Drewry, concluded that he and I would do something about this. Accordingly, we lost no time to get to Resser's room, hid under the bed, and stayed there until they were asleep. Then we took all their money and got out without awakening them. For the record, I might state

that Resser had two dollars and Stefansson sixty cents. The next day we were briefed with a full account of the robbery. Resser had to miss the breakfast, but Stefansson managed to borrow sufficient funds to allow him to attend. However, on learning their plight, Drewry and I loaned Resser the two dollars (which of course was never repaid) and spent the sixty cents on ice cream sodas for four of us. Ultimately, they enjoyed the incident as much as we did.

"In writing the class prophecy for the class of 1903, the prophet stated that in his wanderings he had run across Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the noted explorer. The prophet did not state where such exploration had taken place, and at that time Africa was considered the unexplored region. This is one prophecy, uttered in jest that actually came true." \*\*\*\*

New vistas had loomed for this graduate and although he may not have determined to pursue the field which was eventually to be his, he applied for and received a Unitarian fellowship to Harvard University to further his study and prepare for the work which was to distinguish him nationally and internationally.

Even though his residence has not been in North Dakota since 1902, he has made repeated visits to our state. He returned to the University of North Dakota as a guest speaker after his ethnological expedition to the Arctic and received an honorary degree. A series of lectures was arranged after the third expedition also, and the **Quarterly Journal of the University of North Dakota** 1918-1919 states concerning Mr. Stefansson: "It is ours to say merely that on each return from an extended expedition, he

\*\*\* Interview, Halvor L. Halvorson, Minot, N. Dak.

\*\*\*\*Letter, Fred Harris, March 4, 1951.

visits his old University, where he is always welcome and where he is heartily greeted by his former instructors and by many of his old-time student friends now scattered throughout the state but who are glad to return for the meeting. At each return, too, in addition to more formal public lectures, he speaks informally of his experiences before student groups or classes especially interested. He is, each time, an honor guest at an informal recep-

tion of the University faculty where old acquaintances are renewed and new ones formed. He is a good storyteller, a charming, conversationalist, and an interesting lecturer. He is not tall in stature, and rather slender; mild of manner and gentle of speech."

He is revered, not only by his University friends, but also by his Icelandic friends in this state who speak of him as a friend and scholar with glowing fluency.

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## Thingvalla Pioneer's Story

(Continued from Page 17)

My parents also decided to venture into pioneering, so when it became known that an Icelandic settlement would be started some 270 miles north west from Winnipeg where the proposed Manitoba and North-Western Railway would go through, they prepared to leave the city and settle there.

So in the fall of 1885 my father got work in a logging camp 90 miles north of Shellmouth, that was operated by the aforementioned Mitchell & Bucknell, and spent the winter there to await the arrival of his family the following spring.

★ ★ ★

As already stated, we arrived and were soon settled with our meagre belongings in a crude shack near the east bank of the river and close to the main road that ran through the town, from east to west.

The shack was small and we were crowded, all in one room. It was the only building available so there was no choice.

As the weather was quite warm we suffered no discomfort, except from the chill night air that came through the cracks between the boards on the walls, and also from the mosquitoes that entered through these same cracks, and hummed their irritating "lullaby" close to our ears.

Father worked at the sawmill, thankful for having a steady job for the summer, and though the wages were not high, it was enough for our living and something laid by to make a start on the homestead.

The entry for the homestead had been made early in the spring, when he, with two others, Einar Jonson (Sudfjord) and Jón Magnusson walk-

ed the 15 miles west from Shellmouth to make their choice of a quarter section of land.

Thus these three were the first pioneers in the district, which later became Thingvalla settlement.

Father decided, instead of moving at once out to the homestead, to continue working at the sawmill for the summer months to raise funds for making a start on the homestead.

Life in the little town of Shellmouth was uneventful, except for the coming and going of various groups of people, of different nationalities, dauntless pioneers, venturing into unknown regions of virgin territory to the west and north.

There was no talk of the North-West Rebellion of the previous year, yet there remained an atmosphere of guardedness, or alertness that had not quite been dispelled. A little incident occurred one day that serves to illustrate this feeling. Quite a number of the children (I among them) used to congregate on the bank of the river, near the east end of the bridge.

This bridge, a fairly substantial wooden structure, served as a continuation of the main road through the town, to the west side of the valley, where a grade had been built across the lowest part of the valley, to the Pelly trail.

A notice tacked on both ends of the bridge warned the public that, "any one crossing this bridge at a faster rate than a walk will be prosecuted".

One of the children noticed something that looked like a small herd of cattle moving from the north along the west side of the valley. We all looked, and agreed, it must be stray

cattle, and kept on with our games, with noise and shouts. But our fun was soon rudely interrupted by the thunderous sound of hoofs, and hideous yells and we saw a band of some 20 Indians on horses coming at a full gallop, along the grade towards the bridge. Their painted faces, their feather head-gear streaming behind them, and their blood-curdling war-whoops, were enough to strike terror into us youngsters and we fled in every direction to find a place to hide.

Utterly disregarding the warning sign, the Indians never slackened speed when they reached the bridge, crossed it at full gallop and tore through the town, disappearing as they passed over the rise that marked the east side of the valley.

The incident caused considerable excitement, and was the main subject of discussion for the rest of the day, and some days to come.

But it was generally agreed that there was no cause for alarm, and that this roving band of Indian Braves, coming upon the smooth level grade, could not resist the temptation to race their ponies in a mad dash, giving vent to their wild savage nature, and incidentally scaring the wits out of all and sundry who happened to be along the route.

We had lived in Shellmouth less than two months, when the news came that the eagerly hoped for railway would not pass through that town. It had been rerouted and the new right-of-way would cross the valley some 15 miles south, where a little village had recently sprung up. The effects of this change were soon noticed, as quite a number of people and business places moved away. The saw-mill was moved down the valley and built up again, on the river bank close to the railway right-of-way.

The village was now named Mill-wood.

Father still worked for the mill and after working hours managed to build a good-sized shanty, a short distance from the mill, and when it was finished, our family moved in. This building was roomier than the one we lived in previously, and we were more comfortable. Shortly after moving to Mill-wood father managed to buy two cows from a man who lived a short distance from the village, on a quarter-section of land, he had homesteaded some years previously, and now had a nice herd of cattle.

Our cows were both milking, and we all enjoyed the luxury of rich fresh milk and cream every day without stinting, which was a new experience, and much appreciated.

For the cows there was grass in abundance in the valley; peavine and red-top, in the low spots, and lots of good water.

Our house, if such it could be called, was near the bank of the river, on a nice, clear, level spot, high above the water level. There was a cool roomy cellar, lined with odd scrap boards to prevent the walls from caving in. Along one wall of the cellar was a ledge of earth about 18 inches wide and about 2 ft. from the floor where mother put her milk pans to cool and for the cream to rise. Everything seemed to keep nicely in our cellar, which was clean, dry and surprisingly cool even in the hot weather. There was a trap door or rather a cellar lid, in the kitchen floor that covered the stairway leading down. One morning mother went down to get the milk pans, and was horrified when she found every milk pan more or less filled with little black lizards swimming around in the milk. We had no milk nor cream that day. We were told later

that these little creatures that usually stayed near the water's edge, which seemed to be their natural habitat, would in a thunder storm climb the river bank and seek cover. There had been a severe thunder storm the night this happened, the floor of our cellar was also covered with the lizards, Father had quite a time getting rid of them. They never gave us any trouble except that one time.

★   ★   ★

Time moved on and the long summer days passed uneventfully except for the hundred and one things that daily pass before the eyes of a lad 8 years old, to whom everything was new and every move a delightful adventure, full of discoveries of the most interesting things, exploring nearby gullies, and climbing the hills.

But to describe the dreams and visions and delights of my roaming, would be too big a subject to attempt here.

The new railway reached Millwood in August, as I remember, and now each day, freight and also passengers began to arrive by train.

About this time a family of prospective settlers for the Thingvalla district arrived from Iceland. They were: Helgi Arnason, his wife Guðrún and their two little sons. The older one, Helgi Jr., was about five years old, the other an infant born on board ship, and named Camoens for the ship which brought them across the Atlantic.

These people, worn out after the seemingly endless journey, could not speak a word of English, had almost no funds, and only their meagre belongings. They were in a sad plight, there being no place where a night's lodging could be had, no hotels, nor boarding house where they could get

a meal, only the stores where food could be bought.

In some way, that will never be explained, these people were made to understand that one Icelandic family was living in Millwood and were directed to our home.

They were greeted by my parents, in the most friendly spirit, and Mother I feel sure, took great pleasure in administering to their immediate needs.

It was a great pleasure to all of our family to have these travellers—natives of our own dear Iceland,—come to us, and the fact that they were destined to become settlers in the same district, created a bond of interest.

After a long, serious discussion, in an attempt to solve the problem of the immediate future of the new arrivals, it was mutually agreed that they would share our humble abode for the short time remaining until we would all be moving into the proposed settlement. And so the day finally came, in late October when the journey was made, some 30 miles north-west from Millwood.

It was a cold cloudy day, and the ground had already frozen a little, enough so the wheels of the wagons rattled and the going was rough.

What a miserable journey!

After climbing up the steep incline to reach the prairie above we met a stiff breeze that added a good deal to our discomfort.

The surrounding country presented a dismal sight indeed, as it was all black now, the result of a devastating prairie-fire that had swept the country some weeks before.

A halt was made for noon lunch at a homesteader's place, where we managed to warm up, and satisfy our hunger. After a good rest, feeling much refreshed, we travelled on, and turn-

ing our backs to the wind, by mid-afternoon, reached the edge of the desolate blackness. In the pitch darkness

of the late evening we reached our destination.

(Continued in next Issue)

## *Little Isolated "Iceland" Loyal to U. S.*

The Icelandic people of the geographically freak community of Point Roberts, Washington,—six square miles cut off altogether by land from the United States—are strong supporters of Uncle Sam.

But their pockets are lined with Canadian dollars as the population this summer has been largely Canadian. And merchants and resort owners rejoice, exchange-wise, as Dominion greenbacks are worth more than United States dollars for the first time in many years.

Geography and an old treaty created this unusual North-western Washington community. When the United States-British treaty of 1860 settled the boundary dispute between the two countries along the 49th parallel, Point Roberts, a little nubbin of land sticking down into the Strait of Georgia below the parallel, was cut off. Canada lies adjacent to the north.

★

But Loyalty to the United States remains. Community leaders say that if you suggest substituting Canada's maple leaf for the bald eagle you'll get told off in a hurry.

Community boosters such as Eggert A. Burns, store and restaurant proprietor, also pooh-pooh what many call handicaps to Point Roberts.

Her 15 schoolchildren above the fourth grade must travel more than 60

miles a day through Canada to attend classes in Blaine, in Washington State.

Her 16 miles of roads haven't received Washington state funds. They can't be tied in with the rest of the state highway system.

Freight rates and customs restrictions prohibit farm prosperity. Food and other supplies come by bonded truck over the round-about 56.4 mile route from Bellingham, Washington.

★

And finally, although some of the richest fishing grounds in northwest water lie just off shore, Canada's Fraser River, Point Roberts benefits little. There is no harbor, and seiners are supplied and relieved of their fish by tenders from Bellingham or Anacortes.

It was the fishing which first attracted the Icelanders—many of whom had settled in Canada—to the Point almost 60 years ago. Today nine out of 10 of the approximately 260 year-round residents are of Icelandic descent. One of them, Asta Norman, 69-year-old farm-woman, is a painter of note. She has studied in Germany and received medals.

In an old cemetery, whose graves are appropriately covered with Iceland poppies, are stones bearing names of old Icelandic families such as Linbjorg Simundson, Groa Magnusdottir and Gustav J. T. Iverson.

A glance at the map shows how avail-



able Point Roberts is to Canadians. The Vancouver area is only 18 air miles away and Ladner and New Westminster are closer. On a recent Sunday, Deputy Walter C. Davis of the United

States port of customs entry, reported 2,596 cars brought 11,196 persons across the boundary line. Of some 250 or more cabins and summer homes, about 70 per cent are Canadian-owned.

## The Tale of an Icelandic Airlines Plane

Whenever he recalls those early flights of his one-airplane air line, Nelson is reminded of Old 635—the aircraft which made like a fleet. Most of Transocean's over-water operations have been carried on with C-54's, those dependable, four-engine work horses of the air which grow old so gracefully that they seem to acquire a personality in the process. Transocean flew Old 635 until 1949, giving it new engines and an occasional refurbishing now and then. The plane was finally sold to the Icelandic Air Lines, which operated it between New York, Iceland and Stockholm. Nelson, who felt as though he had lost an old friend, kept track of 635's subsequent career.

"The Icelandic outfit were very proud of 635, because it was the nicest airplane they had. And then, after they'd had it about six months, they hit a bad storm going into Reykjavik and flew 635 into the side of a glacier. The amazing thing was that they had a full load of passengers and crew and 635 broke in two—but they all survived.

"I talked to one of the crew later and he said that the storm was so bad that for three days they didn't dare venture from one wrecked section to the other—though the front of the airplane, with the crew, was only a dozen feet from the main part of the fuselage containing the passengers. It was snowing and blowing so hard that the two parties could only see each other for

seconds at a time. They finally got everyone out, but Old 635 still lies up there on the glacier in Iceland. Sort of sad—but it did its job to the end."

—From "The Daring Young Men of Transocean", by Richard Thruelsen in Saturday Evening Post, Aug. 9, 1952.

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